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## PREFACE

It is true that Otto Jespersen has been known to us as author of great books like *Modern English Grammar*, *Phonetik*, *Language, its Nature, Development and Origin*, *Philosophy of Grammar*, etc., but at the same time it is undeniable that he has been less known as a writer who contributed so many valuable articles to academic periodicals, magazines, or commemorative publications.

The present volume is planned to commemorate the one hundredth birthday of Jespersen, collecting as many of his linguistic writings as possible, so as to enable scholars and students of the English language or language in general to read his papers which were written in smaller forms and thus hitherto escaped their notice. The order of arrangement follows mainly the nature of subjects dealt with—English grammar, phonetics, history of English, language teaching, language in general, international language and miscellaneous papers.

Our grateful acknowledgements are due, first of all, to Mr. Frans Jespersen, the son of the great linguist, for his kind permission to republish these papers in book form, and next to Mr. Niels Haislund, who was an assistant of Jespersen in his lifetime, for help and advice in selecting the articles to be included in this book and for the loan of some of the items which are out of print and hardly accessible in this country. We wish also to thank Mrs. Helen Fogh who translated the Danish original into English and to Mr. H. V. Redman of the British Embassy who, in spite of heavy demands on his time, took the trouble to translate Jespersen's French address at the League of Nations on the universal adoption of Roman characters. Without all these kindnesses it would not have been possible to issue the present volume in this satisfactory form.



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## NEGATION IN ENGLISH AND OTHER LANGUAGES

**T**he nucleus of the following disquisition is the material collected during many years for the chapter on Negatives in vol. III or IV of my *Modern English Grammar* (abbreviated MEG), of which the first two volumes appeared in 1909 and 1914 respectively (Winter, Heidelberg). But as the war has prevented me (provisionally, I hope) from printing the continuation of my book, I have thought fit to enlarge the scope of this paper by including remarks on other languages so as to deal with the question of Negation in general as expressed in language. Though I am painfully conscious of the inadequacy of my studies, it is my hope that the following pages may be of some interest to the student of linguistic history, and that even a few of my paragraphs may be of some use to the logician. My work in some respects continues what DELBRÜCK has written on negation in Indo-European languages (Vergl. Syntax 2. 519 ff.), but while he was more interested in tracing things back to the "ursprache", I have taken more interest in recent developments and in questions of general psychology and logic.

With regard to the older stages of Teutonic or Germanic languages I have learned much from B. DELBRÜCK, *Germanische Syntax I. Zu den negativen Sätzen* (Sächs. Gesellsch. d. Wissensch. Leipzig 1910), supplemented by G. NECKEL, *Zu den germanischen Negationen* (in Kuhn's Zeitschr. 45, 1912). Of much less value are the treatments of the specially Old English negatives in M. KNÖRK, *Die Negation in der altengl-*



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*lischen Dichtung* (Kiel 1907) and M. RAUERT, *Die Negation in den Werken Alfred's* (Kiel 1910) as well as E. EINENKEL, *Die englische Verbalnegation* (in *Anglia* 35, 1911, p. 187 ff. and 401 ff.). As in my Grammar, my chief interest is in Modern English; a great many interesting problems can be best treated in connexion with a language that is accessible to us in everyday conversation as well as in an all-comprehensive literature. Besides, much of what follows will be proof positive that the English language has not stagnated in the modern period, as Einkenkel would have us believe (p. 234 "Bei Caxton ist der heutige zustand bereits erreicht"). Further literature on the subject will be quoted below; here I shall mention only the suggestive remarks in J. VAN GINNEKEN, *Principes de linguistique psychologique* (Amsterdam et Paris 1907, 199 ff.).

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## CHAPTER I

### General Tendencies.

The history of negative expressions in various languages makes us witness the following curious fluctuation: the original negative adverb is first weakened, then found insufficient and therefore strengthened, generally through some additional word, and this in its turn may be felt as the negative proper and may then in course of time be subject to the same development as the original word.

Similar renewals of linguistic expressions may be found in other domains as well, but in this instance they are due not only to the general inconstancy of human habits, but to specific causes operating on these particular words. The negative adverb very often is rather weakly stressed, because some other word in the same sentence receives the strong stress of contrast — the chief use of a negative sentence being

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to contradict and to point a contrast. The negative notion, which is logically very important, is thus made to be accentually subordinate to some other notion; and as this happens constantly, the negative gradually becomes a mere proclitic syllable (or even less than a syllable) prefixed to some other word. The incongruity between the notional importance and the formal insignificance of the negative (often, perhaps, even the fear of the hearer failing to perceive it) may then cause the speaker to add something to make the sense perfectly clear to the hearer.

On the other hand there is a natural tendency, also for the sake of clearness, to place the negative first, or at any rate as soon as possible, very often immediately before the particular word to be negated (generally the verb, see below). At the very beginning of the sentence it is found comparatively often in the early stages of some languages, thus *ou* in Homer (see, for instance, in *Od.* VI 33, 57, 167, 201, 241, 279, VII 22, 32, 67, 73, 159, 205, 239, 293, 309, besides the frequent instances of *ou gár*; *ou* is far less frequent in the middle of sentences). Readers of Icelandic sagas will similarly have noticed the numerous instances of *eigi* and *ekki* at the beginning of sentences, especially in dialogues. In later stages this tendency, which to us seems to indicate a strong spirit of contradiction, is counterbalanced in various ways, thus very effectively by the habit of placing the subject of a sentence first. But it is still strong in the case of prohibitions, where it is important to make the hearer realize as soon as possible that it is not a permission that is imparted; hence in Danish frequently such sentences as *ikke spise det!* with the infinitive (which is chiefly or exclusively due to 'echoism', see my *Nutidssprog hos børn og voksne*, 1916, 164) or *ikke spis det!* with the imperative; cf. Ibsen *Vildanden* 79 *Hys — hys; ikke sig noget endnu* | *ib.* 105 *Men ikke fordærv øjnene!* Further the German *nicht hinauslehnen*, etc., corresponding to the first

## NEGATION IN ENGLISH AND OTHER LANGUAGES

mentioned Danish form; and we might also include prohibitions in other languages, Lat. *noli putare*, etc.

Now, when the negative begins a sentence, it is on account of that very position more liable than elsewhere to fall out, by the phenomenon for which I venture to coin the term of *prosiopesis* (the opposite of what has been termed of old *aposiopesis*): the speaker begins to articulate, or thinks he begins to articulate, but produces no audible sound (either for want of expiration, or because he does not put his vocal chords in the proper position) till one or two syllables after the beginning of what he intended to say. The phenomenon is particularly frequent, and may become a regular speech-habit, in the case of certain set phrases, but may spread from these to other parts of the language.

Some examples of *prosiopesis* outside the domain of negatives may be given here by way of illustration. Forms of salutation like E. *morning* for *Good morning*, Dan. (*God*) *dag*, G. (*Guten*) *tag* are frequent in many languages. Further colloquial E. *See?* for *Do you see* (Do you re)member that chap? | (Will) *that do?* | (I'm a) afraid not | (The) *fact is* . . . (When you) *come to think of it* | (I shall) *see you again this afternoon* | (Have you) *seen the Murrays lately?* | (Is) *that you, John?* | (God) *bless you*. Colloquial Fr. *turement* for *naturellement* | (en)tends-tu? | (Est-ce) *convenu?* | (Par)faitemment (Je ne me) *rappelle plus*. Swedish (Öd)mjukaste *tjenare*.

The interplay of these tendencies — weakening and strengthening, and protraction — will be seen to lead to curiously similar, though in some respects different developments in Latin with its continuation French, in Scandinavian, and in English. A rapid sketch of the history of negatives in these three languages may, therefore, be an appropriate introduction to the more specified investigations of the following chapters.

The starting point in all three languages is the old negative *ne*, which I take to be (together with the variant *me*) a primitive interjection of disgust, accompanied by the facial gesture of contracting the muscles of the nose (Dan. *rynke på*

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*næsen*, G. *die nase rümpfen*, Fr. *froncer les narines*; the E. *to turn*, or *to screw, up one's nose* is not so expressive). This natural origin will account for the fact that negatives beginning with nasals (*n*, *m*) are found in many languages outside the Indo-European family.

In *Latin*, then, we have at first sentences like

(1) *ne dico*.

This persists with a few verbs only, *nescio*, *nequeo*, *nolo*. *Ne* also enters into the well known combinations *neque*, *neuter*, *numquam*, *nemo*, *ne . . quidem*, *quin*, etc., and is also used "as a conjunction" in subjunctival clauses; further as an "interrogative particle" in *scis-ne?* 'you know, don't you?'. But otherwise *ne* is felt to be too weak, and it is strengthened by the addition of *oenum* 'one thing'; the resulting *non* becomes the usual negative adverb and like *ne* is generally placed before the verb:

(2) *non dico*.

In Old French, *non* becomes *nen*, as in *nenil*, *nenni*, properly 'not he, not it', but more usually with further phonetic weakening *ne*, and thus we get:

(3) *jeo ne di*.

This form of negative expression survives in literary French till our own days in a few combinations, *je ne sais*, *je ne saurais le dire*, *je ne peux*, *n'importe*; but in most cases, the second *ne*, like the first, was felt to be too weak, and a strengthening was found to be necessary, though it is effected in a different way, namely by the addition after the verb, thus separated from *ne*, of some such word as *mie* 'a crumb', *point* 'a point', or *pas* 'a step':

(4) *je ne dis pas* (or rather: *je n' dis pas*).

Everyday colloquial French does not stop here: the weak *ne*, *n'* disappears and we have as the provisionally final stage:

(5) *je dis pas*.

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If we turn to *Old Norse*, we first find some remnants of the old *ne* before the verb, inherited from Old Arian, = Got. *ni*, OS. OHG. *ni*, OE *ne*; thus

(1) *Haraldr ne veit*; cf. Lokasenna: þú gefa ne skyldir 'thou shouldst not give'.

This was strengthened in various ways, by adding *at* 'one thing' = Got. *ainata*, or *a*, which is generally explained as = Got. *aiw*, Lat. *ærum*, but may according to Kock be merely a weakened form of *at*; both were placed after the verb and eventually became enclitic quasi-suffixes; the result being

(2) *Haraldr ne veit-at*; or, with a different word-order, *ne veit-at Haraldr*.

In the latter combination, however, *ne* was dropped through prosiopesis:

(3) *veit-at Haraldr*.

This form, with *-at* or *-a* as the negative element, is frequent enough in poetry; in prose, however, another way of strengthening the negative was preferred as having "more body", namely by means of *eigi* or *ekki* after the verb; these also at first must have had a *ne* before the verb as the bearer of the negative idea, as they are compounded of *ei*, orig. 'always' like the corresponding OE *ā*, and *eitt* 'one (neutr.)' + *ge*, *gi*, which was at first positive (it corresponds to Got. *hun*, having a voiced consonant in consequence of weak stress; see Delbrück for relation to Sanskr. *caná*) but acquired a negative signification through constant employment in negative sentences. This, then, becomes the usual negative in Scandinavian languages; e. g. Dan. *ej* (now chiefly poetical: colloquial only in a few more or less settled combinations like "nej, jeg vil ej") and *ikke* (with regard to *inte* see below). The use of the original negative *ne* with a verb has in these languages disappeared centuries ago, leaving as the only curious remnant the first sound of *nogen*, which is, however, a positive pronoun 'some, any', from *ne veit (ek) hverr* 'nescio quis'. Sic transit . . .

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The Danish *ikke* shares with French colloquial *pas* the disadvantage of being placed after the verb: *jeg veed ikke* just as *je sais pas*, even after the verb and subject in cases like *det veed jeg ikke*; but in dependent clauses we have protraction of *ikke*: *at jeg ikke veed | fordi jeg ikke veed*, etc.

In *English* the development has been along similar lines, though with some interesting new results, due chiefly to changes that have taken place in the Modern English period. The starting point, as in the other languages, was

(1) *ic ne secge*.

This is the prevalent form throughout the OE period, though the stronger negatives which were used (and required) whenever there was no verb, *na* (from *ne* + *a* = Got. *aiw*, ON *ei*), *nalles* 'not at all', and *noht* (from *nawiht*, *nowiht*, orig. meaning 'nothing'), were by no means rare after the verb to strengthen the preceding *ne*. The last was the word surviving in Standard English, and thus we get the typical ME form

(2) *I ne seye not*.

Here *ne* was pronounced with so little stress that it was apt to disappear altogether, and *not* becomes the regular negative in all cases:

(3) *I say not*.

This point — the practical disappearance of *ne* and the exclusive use of *not* — was reached in the fifteenth century. Thus far the English development presents an exact parallel to what had happened during the same period in German. Here also we find as the earliest stage (1) *ni* before the verb, then (2) *ne*, often weakened into *n-* or *en* (which probably means syllabic *n*) before and *niht* after the verb; *niht* of course is the compound that corresponds to E. *not*; and finally (3) *nicht* alone. The rules given in Paul's *Mittelhochdeutsche Grammatik* (4th ed. 1894) § 310 ff. for the use of *ne* alone and

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with *niht* and of the latter alone might be applied to Middle English of about the same date with hardly any change except in the form of the words, so close is the correspondence. But German remains at the stage of development reached towards the end of the middle period, when the weak *ne, en* had been given up; and thus the negative continues in the awkward position after the verb. We saw the same thing in colloquial Fr. *pas* and in Dan. *ikke*; but these are never separated from the verb by so many words as is often the case in German, the result being that the hearer or reader is sometimes bewildered at first and thinks that the sentence is to be understood in a positive sense, till suddenly he comes upon the *nicht*, which changes everything; see, for instance "Das leben ist der güter höchstes nicht". I remember feeling the end of the following sentence as something like a shock when reading it in an article by Gabelentz (Zeitschr. f. völkerpsychol. 8.153) "Man unterschätze den deutschen stil der zopfzeit, den der canzleien des vorigen und vorvorigen jahrhunderts nicht". In dependent clauses *nicht*, like other subjects, is placed before the verb: *dass er nicht kommt* | *wenn er nicht kommt*.

In English, on the other hand, we witness a development that obviates this disadvantage. The Elizabethans began to use the auxiliary *do* indiscriminately in all kinds of sentences, but gradually it was restricted to those sentences in which it served either the purpose of emphasis or a grammatical purpose. In those questions in which the subject is not an interrogatory pronoun, which has to stand first, *do* effects a compromise between the interrogatory word-order (verb-subject) and the universal tendency to have the subject before the verb (that is, the verb that means something) as in "Did he come?" (See Progress in Lang. p. 93 for parallels from other languages). And in sentences containing *not* a similar compromise is achieved by the same means, *not* retaining its place

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after the verb which indicates tense, number and person, and yet being placed before the really important verb. Thus we get

(4) *I do not say.*

Note that we have a corresponding word-order in numerous sentences like *I will not say* | *I cannot say* | *I have not said*, etc. But in this position, *not* cannot keep up its strongly stressed pronunciation; and through its weakening we arrive at the colloquial

(5) *I don't say.*

In many combinations even the sound [t] is often dropped here, and thus *nowiht*, *nought* has been finally reduced to a simple [n] tagged on to an auxiliary of no particular signification. If we contrast an extremely common pronunciation of the two opposite statements *I can do it* and *I cannot do it*, the negative notion will be found to be expressed by nothing else but a slight change of the vowel [ai kæn du· it | ai kæn du· it]. Note also the extreme reduction in a familiar pronunciation of *I don't know* and *I don't mind* as [ai dn-nou] or [ai d-nou] and [ai dm-maind] or [ai d-maind], where practically nothing is left of the original negative. It is possible that some new device of strengthening may at some future date be required to remedy such reductions.

It is interesting to observe that through the stages (4) and (5) the English language has acquired a negative construction that is closely similar to that found in Finnish, where we have a negative auxiliary, inflected in the various persons before an unchanged main verb: *en sido* I do not bind, *et sido* thou dost not bind, *ei sido* he does not bind, *emme sido* we ..., *ette sido* you (pl) ..., *eivät sido* they do not bind. There is, however, the important difference that in Finnish the tense is marked not in the auxiliary, but in the form of the main verb: *en sitonut* I did not bind, *emme sitoneet* we did not bind (*sitonut*, pl *sitoneet* is a participle).



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A few things must be added here to supplement the brief sketch of the evolution of English negatives. The old *ne* in some frequently occurring combinations lost its vowel and was fused with the following word; thus we have the following pairs of positive and negative words:

(a) verbs (given in late ME. forms):

am — nam

art — nart

is — nis

has — nas

had(de) — nad(de)

was — nas

were(n) — nere(n)

will(e) — nill(e)

wolde — nolde

These had all become extinct before the MnE. period, except *nill*, which is found rarely, e. g. Kyd Sp. I. 4. 7. I nill refuse; twice in pseudo-Shakespearian passages: Pilgr. 188 in scorn or friendship, nill I construe whether | Per. III prol. 55 I nill relate. Shakespeare himself has it only in the combinations *will you*, *nill you* (Shr. II. 273) and *will he*, *nill he* (Hml. V. 1. 19); and the latter combination (or *will I*, *nill I*; *will ye*, *nill ye*, which all would yield the same phonetic result) survives in mod. *willy-nilly*, rarely spelt as separate words, as in Byron DJ. 6. 118 Will I — Nill I (rimes with *silly*) | Allen W. 64 they would obtrude themselves, will he, nill he, upon him — where both the person (*he*) and the tense shows that the whole has really become one unanalyzed adverb.

(b) other words (given in MnE. forms):

one, an, a (OE *ān*) — none, no

ought, ought — naught, nought, not

either — neither

or — nor

ever — never.

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It should be remembered that *no* represents two etymologically distinct combinations: OE *ne ān* (as in *no man*, also in *nobody*, *nothing*), and OE *ne + ā* (as in: are you ill? No; also in *nowhere*); cf. MEG. II 16. 7.

The transition between stages (2) and (3) is seen, for instance, in Mandeville (14th c.), where *ne* by itself is rare: 130 zif the snow *ne* were, but is more frequent with some other negative word: 45 it *ne* reynethe *not* ! 51 yee *ne* schulle *not* suffre | 52 *ne* ben *not* | 58 there *nys nouth* mete for hors *ne* watre | 181 *ne . . nevere*. But *ne* is not required, see e. g. 45 they may not enlarge it . . it reyneth *not*. — A late example of isolated *ne* is Gammer 140 he *ne* can; the usual negative in that play is *not*.

Before the *do*-construction was fully developed, there was a certain tendency to place *not* before the verb, in all kinds of sentences, thus not only in dependent clauses (the difference in word-order between main sentences and dependent clauses, which we have alluded to in Scandinavian and German, was never carried through in English). The word-order in "And if I *not performe*, God let me neuer thrive" for *performe not* is considered by Puttenham, The Arte of Engl. Poesie 1589, p. 262, as a "pardonable fault" which "many times giues a pretie grace vnto the speech": it is pretty frequent in Shakespeare, see Al. Schmidt, Lex. p. 779, but is rare after the 17th c. Examples: Sh. H4B. IV. 1. 107 it not appeares to me | Hml. III. 2. 217 For who not needs, shall neuer lacke a frend | Lr. IV. 2. 1 I meruell our mild husband Not met vs on the way (ib. IV. 2. 50 both orders closely together) | Tp. II. 1. 121 I not doubt | Otway 239 if I not revenge Thy sufferings | Cowper Task IV. 39 the cups That cheer but not inebriate | Rup. Brooke Poems 23 Himself not lives, but is a thing that cries.

When *do* became the ordinary accompaniment of *not*, it was not at first extended to all verbs: besides the well-known instances with *can*, *may*, *must*, *will*, *shall*, *am*, *have*, *dare*, *need*,

*ought* we must here mention *know*, which now takes *do*, but was long used in the form *know not*, thus pretty regularly in the seventeenth and often in the eighteenth and even in the first part of the nineteenth century. In poetry forms without *do* are by no means rare, but they are now felt as archaisms, and as such must also be considered those instances in which prose writers dispense with *do*. In some instances this is probably done in direct imitation of Biblical usage, thus in Bennett C 1. 47 Somehow, in a way that Darius *comprehended not* — cf. A. V. John 1. 5. And the light shineth in darknesse, and the darknesse comprehended it not. Perhaps also in Hope F. 43 Isn't Haddington breaking up? I don't know. I *understood not* — this combination occurs Luke 2. 50 and elsewhere in the Bible.

There is a curious agreement among different languages in the kind of verbs that tend to keep up an old type of negative construction after it has been abandoned in other verbs; cf. Lat. *nolo*, Engl. *null*, MHG. *en will* and Lat. *ne scio*, Fr. *je ne sais*, MHG. *i-n weiz*, Eng. *I know not*. These syntactical correspondences must, of course, have developed independently in each language — in consequence of natural human tendencies on a common basis. (But I do not believe in Miklosich's explanation which is accepted by Delbrück, Synt. 2. 523).

## CHAPTER II

### Strengthening of Negatives.

There are various ways of strengthening negatives. Sometimes it seems as if the essential thing were only to increase the phonetic bulk of the adverb by an addition of no particular meaning, as when in Latin *non* was preferred to *ne*, *non* being according to the explanation generally accepted compounded

## NEGATION IN ENGLISH AND OTHER LANGUAGES

of *ne* and *oenum* (= *unum*) 'one' (neutr.). But in most cases the addition serves to make the negative more impressive as being more vivid or picturesque, generally through an exaggeration, as when substantives meaning something very small are used as subjuncts. Some Engl. examples will show how additions of this kind are often used more or less incongruously, no regard being taken to their etymological meaning:

GE A. 173 She didn't know one *bit* how to speak to a gentleman | Trollope D. 1. 189 I don't believe it was Peppermont's fault a bit | Kipling J. 2. 127 he was not a bit impressed | Di D. 649 it's not a bit of use | Scott A. 2. 17 'An accomplice hid among them, I suppose.' 'Not a *jot*.' | Kipling S. 58 Never got a *sniff* of any ticket | Shaw P. 55 Am I not to care at all? — Not a *scrap* | Were you tired? — Not a scrap | Philips L. 93 he doesn't care a *snap of his strong fingers* whether he ever sees me again | Doyle M. 29 he doesn't care a *toss* about all that | Kipling L. 112 the real world doesn't care a tinker's — doesn't care a bit [he breaks off; cf. Farmer & Henley, not worth a *tinker's damn*, or *curse*, see also Lawrence Fortn. Review 1917. 328 Who now cares a tinker's curse for Cheops?] | Page J. 491 I don't give a *blank* what you think.

Collections of similar expressions have been made by J. Hem "Über die bildliche verneinung in der mitttelenglischen poesie" (Angha 15. 41 and 396 ff.) and H. Willert "Über bildliche verneinung im neuenglischen" (Herrigs Archiv 105.36 ff.). The term "bildliche verneinung", by the way, does not seem a very happy one for these combinations, as it is not the negation itself that is expressed figuratively; the term would be more suitably applied to some of the instances I have collected below under the heading of "Indirect negatives".

There is a curious use of the word *cat* in this connexion which is paralleled in Danish (der er ikke en kat der veed det, i. e. nobody) in Philips L. 285 there is not a cat he knows

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(cf. the old: it shold not auaylle me a cattes tayl, Caxton R. 50).

To the same order belong, of course, the well-known French words already alluded to, *mie* (obsolete), *goutte*, *pas*, *point*. Originally *pas* could only be used with a verb of motion, etc., but the etymological meaning of all these words was soon forgotten, and they came to be used with all kinds of verbs. — Similar supplements to negatives are frequent in all languages; I have noted, for instance, the Italian “non mi batterò *un fico secco*” (Bersezio, Bolla di sapone 71). In Dan. *spor* ‘trace’ is the most usual addition: “han læser ikke spor”, etc., followed by partitive *af* not only before subs., as in “der var ikke spor *af* aviser”, but also before adjs. and verbs: “han er ikke spor *af* bange” | A. Skram, Lucie 187 Han skulde ikke fare op, *ikke spor af* fare op. One may even hear “Det forstår jeg mig ikke spor *af* på”, where *af* has no object. Another frequent combination is *ikke skygge* ‘not a shade’.

We must here also mention the extremely frequent instances in which words meaning ‘nothing’ come to mean simply ‘not’: these, of course, are closely related to *not a bit*, etc., meaning ‘not’. Thus Lat. *nihil* (cf. also *non*, above), Greek *oudèn*, which has become the usual Mod.Gr. word for ‘not’ *dèn* (pronounced *ðen*), Engl. *not* from *nought*, *nawiht*, Germ. *nicht* (cf. ON *rættki*); further ON *ekki* from *euttki*, Dan. *ikke*, Swed. *icke*; also Dan. and Swed. *inte*, in Dan. now obsolete in educated speech, though very frequent within living memory even in the highest classes; in dialects it survives in many forms, *it*, *et*, *int*, etc. The expanded form *intet* is still in use as the pronoun ‘nothing’, chiefly however in literary style.

Where the word for ‘nothing’ becomes usual in the sense ‘not’, a new word is frequently formed for the pronoun: thus (probably) Lat. *nihil*, when *non* was degraded, Engl. *nothing* (besides *nought*, the fuller form of *not*), Dan. *ingenting*, G. *nichts*. But in its turn, the new word may be used as a sub-

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junct meaning 'not', thus *nihil* (above), Engl. *nothing* as in *nothing loth*, etc., see the full treatment in MEG. II. 17. 36 ff.

Another way of strengthening the negative is by using some word meaning 'never' without its temporal signification. This is the case with OE *nā* (*ne* + *ā* = Got. *nī aiws*, Germ. *nie*); this *nā* was very frequent in OE and later as a rival of *not*, and has prevailed in Scotch and the northern dialects, where it is attached to auxiliaries in the same way as *-n't* in the South: *canna*, *dinna*, etc. In Standard Engl. its rôle is more restricted: besides being used as a sentence-word in answers it is found in combinations like *whether or no* | *no better*, *no more*, see MEG. II. 16. 8; sometimes it may be doubtful whether we have this original adverb or the pronominal adjective *no* from OE *nān*, *ne* + *ān*, see also ib. 16. 7. — The corresponding ON *nei* has given Engl. *ney* (on which see below); another ON compound of the same *ei* is *eigi*, which gradually loses its temporal signification and becomes the ordinary word for 'not', see Delbrück, and Neckel, KZ. 45. 15 ff.

Engl. *never* also in some connexions comes to mean merely 'not': Kipling L. 109 I never knew it was so chilly [= didn't know] | James S. 6 he knew that for a moment Brown never moved. A transitional case is Di. Do. 76 never once looking over his shoulder.

*Never* in this sense is especially frequent before *the* (OE *þȳ*) with a comparative (as in *nevertheless*), and in the combination *never a* = 'no', which has become a kind of compound (adjunct) pronoun, used to a great extent in some dialects (see EDD.: *never a*), and very frequent in colloquial English, especially in the phrase *never a word*: Gammer 134 then we be neuer the nearer || Ch. C. 670 it nedeth never a deel | More U. 264 to neuer a penny coste | Gammer 136 he would . . . leaue you neuer a hen on-lieue | Eastw. 482 Canst thou tell nere a one | Marlowe F. (1616) 759 thou canst not tell ne're a word on't | Sh. H4 A. II. 1. 21 you [Q: they] will

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allow us ne're a jourden [note the difference from: they will never allow us a j.] | Sh. H4 B. II. 2. 62 neuer a mans thought in the world keeps the rode-way better then thine | Buny. P. 232 the man answered never a word | Di F. 445 he bit his lip, and said never a word | GE. A. 62 when you're married, and have got a three-legged stool to sit on, and never a blanket to cover you | Stevenson JHF. 39 he answered never a word | Kipling L. 218 but never a word did Dick say of Maisie | id. J. 2. 53 but never a beast came to the shrine | Wells T. 21 blank slopes, with never a sign of a decent beast.

A Danish parallel is Holberg Ul. 1. 7 Jeg seer aldrig en smuk plet paa denne Helene.

*Never* is also used in surprised exclamations like Di F. 680 Why, it's never Bella! | Shaw M. 203 Why, it's never No. 406! — In the same way in Danish: det er da vel aldrig Bella!

Dan. *aldrig* also means 'not' in the combination *aldrig så snart* 'no sooner' as in Goldschmidt Hjeml. 1. 105 Men aldrig saa snart var seiren vunden, før den hos den seirende vakte den dybeste anger.

The frequent adverbial strengthenings of negatives as in *not at all*, *pas du tout*, *aldeles ikke*, *slet ikke*, *durchaus nicht*, *gar nicht*, etc., call for no remark here. It should be mentioned, however, that *by no means* and corresponding expressions in other languages are very often used without any reference to what might really be called 'means', in the same way as in the instances just referred to there is no reference to the time-element of 'never'. In colloquial Dan. one may sometimes hear sentences like "Jeg synes, at brevet var *ikke ud af stedet* tort" for 'not the least'.

On the flux and reflux in Greek *oudeís*, strengthened into *oudè heís*, soldered into *outh'heís*, which was weakened into *outhéís*, and replaced in its turn by *oudeís*, see the interesting

account in Meillet, *Aperçu d'une histoire de la Langue Grecque*, 1913 290 f.

On strengthening through repeated negation see chapter VII.

## CHAPTER III

### Positive becomes Negative.

The best-known examples of a transition from positive to negative meaning are found in French. Through the phenomenon which Bréal aptly terms "contagion" words like *pas*, *point*, *jamais*, *plus*, *aucun*, *personne*, which were extremely frequent in sentences containing *ne* with the verb, acquired a negative colouring, and gradually came to be looked upon as more essential to express the negative notion than the diminutive *ne*. As this came to be used exclusively in immediate juxtaposition with a verb, the other words were in themselves sufficient to express the negative notion when there was no verb, at first perhaps in answers: "Ne viendra-t-il jamais?" "*Jamais*." | "Ne vois-tu personne?" "*Personne*." Now we have everywhere quite regularly: *Pas de ça!* | Pourquoi *pas?* | le compartiment des *pas-fumeurs* | Mérimée 2 Hér. 31 Permettez-moi de lui dire un seul mot, *rien qu'un seul* | Daudet Sapho 134 Il frissonnait *rien que* d'y penser | id. Numa 105 une chambre et un cabinet... la chambre *guère* plus grande, etc. In a somewhat different way Daudet Tart. Alpes 252 Mais si vous croyez que Tartarin avait peur, *pas plus!* | Maupass. Bécasse 201 et toute la ligne [tous les enfants assis en ligne] mangeait jusqu'à *plus faim* [= jusqu'à ce qu'ils n'eussent plus faim].

The next step is the leaving out of *ne* even where there is a verb. This may have begun through prosiopesis in interrogative and imperative sentences: (ne) viens-tu *pas?* | (ne) dis *pas ça!*



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Cf. also (Il ne) faut *pas* dire ça! It may have been a concomitant circumstance in favour of the omission that it is in many sentences impossible or difficult to hear *ne* distinctly in rapid pronunciation: *on n'a pas* | *on n'est pas* | *on n'arrive jamais* | *la bonne n'a rien* | *je ne nie pas*, etc. Sentences without *ne*, which may be heard any day in France, also among the educated, begin to creep into literature, as in Halévy Notes 91 *c'est pas* ces gredins-là | ib. 92 J'ai *pas* fini, qu'elle disait (ib. 93, 240, 239) | Daudet Sapho 207 Vaut-il *pas* mieux accepter ce qui est? | Gonc. Germ. L. 200 As *pas* peur! | Maupass. Vie 132 une famille où l'argent comptait pour *rien* | id Fort 68 tu seras *pas* mal dans quelque temps (ib. 69) | Rolland JChr. 7. 96 Voudrais-tu *pas* que je reprisse la vieille devise de haine? (Similarly *ne* is now often omitted in those cases in which "correct grammar" requires its use without any *pas*, for instance *de peur qu'il vienne*). In the soldiers' conversations in René Benjamin's Gaspard there is scarcely a single *ne* left. In the case of *plus* this new development might lead to frequent ambiguity, if this had not been obviated in the popular pronunciation, in which [j ān a ply] means 'there is no more of it' and [j ān a plys] 'there is more of it' (= literary *il n'y en a plus* and *il y en a plus*). In *plus de bruit* we have a negative, but in *Plus de bruit que de mal* a positive expression, though here the pronunciation is always the same. Note the difference between *Jean n'avait plus confiance* and *Jean n'avait pas plus confiance* [*que Pierre*]; cf. also *Jean n'avait pas confiance, non plus* 'nor had . . .'. — There is a curious consequence of this negative use of *plus*, namely that *moins* may occasionally appear as a kind of comparative of its etymological antithesis: Mérimée 2 Hér. 50 Plus d'écoles, plus d'asiles, plus de bienfaisance, encore moins de théologie.

One final remark before we leave French. From a psychological point of view it is exactly the same process that leads to the omission of *ne* in two sentences like *il (ne) vout*

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*nul danger* and *il (ne) voit aucun danger*; but etymologically they are opposites: in one an originally negative word keeps its value, in the other an originally positive word is finally changed into a negative word.

In Spanish we have some curious instances of positive words turned into negative ones: *nada* from Lat. *nata* (*res nata*) means 'nothing', and *nadie*, older *nadien* with the ending of *quien* instead of *nado* from *natus*, means 'nobody'. In both I imagine that the initial sound of *n-* as in *no* has favoured the change. Through the omission of *no* some temporal phrases come to mean 'never' as in Calderon, Alc. de Zal. 2. 12 *En todo el dia* Se ve apartar de la puerta | Galdós Doña Perf. 68 A pesar de tan buen ejemplo, *en mi vida* me hubiera something to ejercer una profesion... Thus also *absolutamente* 'durchaus nicht', see Hanssen, Span. Gramm. § 60, 5.

In ON several words and forms are changed from positive to negative, as already indicated above: the ending *-gi* (*-ge*) in *eigi*, *einngi* (*engi*), *eittgi* (*etki*, *ekki*), *hvírrgi*, *manngi*, *vættki*, *aldrigi*, *ævagi*, further the enclitic *-a* and *-at*.

In German must be mentioned *kein* from OHG. *dihhein*, orig. 'irgend einer' (*dih* of unknown origin), though the really negative form *nihhein* has of course also contributed to the negative use of *kein*; further *weder* from OHG. *ni-wedar* (*wedar* = E. *whether*).

In Engl. we have *but* from *ne*... *but*, cf. northern dial. *nobbut* (see below ch. XII), and a rare *more* = 'no more', a clear instance of prosiopesis, which, however, seems to be confined to the South-Western part of England, see Phillpotts M. 29 Not much of a scholar. More am I | ib. 144 You're no longer a child, and more am I | ib. 12 Couldn't suffer it — more

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could he | ib. 322 you meant that I couldn't expect that man to like me. More I do. (Cf. with neg. v. ib. 309 he's a man that won't be choked off a thing — and more won't I). — Similarly *me either* = 'nor me either': Quiller-Couch M. 111 it so happens that I have no small change about me. — 'Me either', said Mrs. T. idiomatically (also ib. 181).

Similarly the order to the helmsman when he is too near the wind *Near!* is said to be shortened through prosiopesis (which is here also a kind of haplology) from "No near!" (*near* the old comparative meaning what is now called *nearer*), see NED. *near* adv. 1 c.

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## CHAPTER IV

### Indirect and Incomplete Negation.

In this chapter we shall discuss a great many different ways of expressing negative ideas through indirect or round-about means, and finally words that without being real negatives express approximately the same thing as the ordinary negative adverb.

#### A. Indirect Negation.

(1) Questions may be used implying a negative statement: (1) nexal question, e. g. "Am I the guardian of my brother?" = 'I am not . . .'; inversely a negative question means a positive assertion: "Isn't he stupid?" = 'he is (very) stupid'; — and (2) special question, e. g. "Who knows?" = 'I do not know', or even 'No one knows'; "And what should they know of England who only England know?" (Kipl.) = 'they know nothing'; "where shall I go?" = 'I have nowhere to go'.

Examples of the first:

Shaw 2. 16 Would you know him again if you saw him?  
— Shall I ever forget him! | Mrs. Browning A. 326 Could I

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see his face, I wept so [= I wept so much that I could not see] | Caine C. 34 Well, didn't I just get a wiggling from the sister now! | Kipling S. 72 Did you hit Rabbits-Eggs. — Did I jolly well not?

*Must I not?* = 'I must', e. g. Byron 627 must I not die? | Hawthorne Sn. 53 It has been a wilderness from the Creation. Must it not be a wilderness for ever? | Hardy R. 292 Must I not have a voice in the matter, now I am your wife?

*Won't I?* = 'I will': Byron 573 And wilt thou? — Will I not? | Di. N. 95 Oh my eye, won't I give it to the boys! | Brontë P. 24 There's Waddy making up to her: won't I cut him out? | Mered R. 27 I say, if you went to school, wouldn't you get into rows, | ib. 27 I never drank much claret before. Won't I now, though! Claret is my wine.

The reply in Doyle S. 5. 75 was there ever a more mild-mannered young man? 'It is true' — clearly shows that the other person rightly understood the first speaker's seeming question as a negative statement: 'there never was...'

In the same way naturally in other languages as well. In Dan. this form has the curious effect that after *så sandelig* the same meaning may be expressed with and without *ikke*, the word-order being the same, only in the latter case we have the slight rising of the tone indicating a question: Nansen Guds fr. 62 Ja, saa sandelig er det ikke ham! Og han kommer her til mig! [= sandelig er det ham]. In the same way in Norwegian and Swedish: Ibsen Vildand 61 Jo sa sandelig glemte jeg det ikke | Lagerlöf Gösta B. 1. 153 Nå sannerligen ser han ej något svart och stort komma. (In none of these quotations, however, there is any question mark.)

A variant of these nexal questions is the elliptical use of a subject and a ('loose') infinitive [see Progr. in Language § 164 f.] with a rising intonation, implying that it is quite impossible to combine the two ideas: Sh. Merch III. 1. 37 My

owne flesh and blood to rebell! | Sh. H4 B. II. 4. 45 You make fat rascalls, Mistris Dol. — I make them? Gluttonie and Diseases make them, I make them not | Farquhar B. 341 Oh la! a footman have the spleen | Goldsmith 660 you amaze me. Such a girl as you want jewels! | Thack. P. 2. 130 Why! they don't come down here to dine you know, they only make believe to dine. *They* dine here, Law bless you! They go to some of the swell clubs | id. V. 180 My son and heir marry a beggar's girl out of the gutter. D— him, if he does | id. N. 163 'Gracious God!' he cried out; 'my boy insult a gentleman at my table!' | Kipling J. 2. 72 Me to sing to naked men! | Galsworthy MP. 8 A man not know what he had on! No, no!

Examples of negative statements expressed by questions containing an interrogative pronoun: Sh. Tit. V. 3. 18 What bootes it thee to call thy selfe a sunne? | Gent II. 1. 158 [she hath not writ to me.] What need she, When shee hath made you write to your selfe? | Who cares? [= 'no one cares', or 'I don't care'].

In this way *what not*, especially after a long enumeration, comes to mean 'everything' (double negation), as in Sh. Shr. V. 2. 110 Marrie, peace it boads, and loue, and quiet life, An awfull rule, and right supremicie: And to be short, what not, that's sweete and happie | Buny. P. 121 silver, gold, pearls, precious stones, and *what not* | Scott OM. 68 Robin, who was butler, footman, gardener, and what not | Seeley E. 111 As now we put our money into railways or what not? so then the keen man of business took shares in the new ship | Hardy F. 314 Whether Newfoundland, mastiff, bloodhound, or what not, it was impossible to say | id. L. 179 Talking of Exhibitions, World's Fairs, and what not | Galsworthy P. 2. 30 if I want five shillings for a charity or what not | NP. 1912 whether he be Hindu or Mohammedan or what-not in religion | Shaw 1. 18 he wont consent unless they send letters and

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invitations and congratulations and the dence knows what not || Di D. 544 (vg) they would give me what-not for to eat and drink.

Hence a *what-not* as a sb, 'piece of furniture with shelves for nick-nacks': Caine C 399 on a whatnot at the door-side of the room another photograph stood.

*What not* is used as a vb and adj in By DJ 8.110 Had been neglected, ill-used, and what not ' Morris N 46 the government, or the consul, or the commission, or what not other body of fools.

Pronominal questions implying a negative are, of course, frequent in all languages: Dan. *hvem veed?* Fr. *qui sait?* Sp. *quién sabe?* = 'no one knows', etc.

Here belong also questions with *why*: *Why should he?* = ['there is no reason why he should'] 'he should not'; *Why shouldn't he?* = 'he should'. — Note the continuation in Locke S. 197 Why should she, *any more* than I?

In the following two quotations the continuation *and not* shows clearly that the negative questions are to be taken = positive statements:

Defoe G. 28 Why should he not be accepted for what he is, and not for what he is not | Benson A. 40 Doesn't one develop through one's passions, and not through one's renunciations?

In colloquial Dan. one hears pretty frequently questions containing *næsten*, which is only justified logically if the sentence is transposed into the corresponding negative: "Kan du næsten se dærhenne?" (= du kan visst næsten ikke se) | hvordan kan her næsten blive plads til os allesammen? | Knudsen Lærer Ur 104 Hvad skulde saadan een næsten forslaa tiden med — andet end med det unaturlige! | Pontoppidan Landsbybill. 162 Tror jeg næsten ikke, det er første gang, solen skinner for mig paa denne egn.

A similar phenomenon is the use of *heller*, which is not common except with a negative, in Jensen Bræen 230 Hvorledes skulde de heller forstaa kæmper med lyst haar?

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(2) Another popular way of denying something is by putting it in a conditional clause with "I am a villain" or something similar in the main clause: Devil E. 534 If I understand thee, I am a villain | Sh. H4. A. II. 4. 169 I am a rogue if I drunke to day | ib. 205 if I fought not with fiftie of them, I am a bunch of radish | Sh. Merch. II. 2. 120 I am a Jew if I serue the Jew anie longer | B. Jo. 3. 195 Don't you know it? No, I am a rook if I do.

A variant is "the devil take me" or "I will be damned" etc. in the main clause, often with prosiopesis "Be damned" or "damned": any substitute for *damn* may of course be used: Swift J. 428 You may converse with them if you please, but the — take me if ever I do | Kipling L. 229 'We'll go into the parks if you like'. 'Be damned if I do' | Mered R. 394 'Will you leave it to me?' 'Be damned before I do!' | Norris P. 90 Darned if I know | Kipling L. 121 I'm dashed if I know [also Shaw D. 283] | Di F. 343 Dashed if I know! [Also Mered H. 346] | GE. S. 158 ding me if I remember | Read K. 17 Dinged ef I oughtenter be plowin' | Hardy R. 56 be dazed if he who do marry the maid won't hae an uncommon picture . . . . . Be jown'd if I don't learn ten new songs | Smedley F. 1. 268 hang me if I can tell | Kipling L. 83 'Give me credit for a little gumption'. 'Be hanged if I do!' 'Be hanged then' | Shaw 2. 120 Blame me if it did not come into my head once or twyst that he must be horff 'is chump | Trollope D. 1. 50 I'll be shot if I am | Locke A. 95 I'm shot if you do | Di M. 280 It does you honour. I'm blest if it don't | Hughes T. 1. 220 blest if you ain't the best old fellow ever was.

With these last sentences containing *blessed* may be compared the following indirect negatives: Swift P. 92 God bless you, if you ha'n't taken snuff | Di D. 132 why, Lord love my heart alive, if it ain't a treat to look at him!

We have *but* = 'if not' in Sh. Merch. II. 6. 52 Beshrew me but I loue her heartily [= 'damn me if I do not' = 'I do']. Thus often

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in Sh.; *but* here might be taken = Lat. *sed*, as *Beshrew me* is used as a single asseveration before a main sentence, e. g. Tw. II. 3. 85 *Beshrew me, the knights in admirable fooling.*

A curious variant is found in Swift P. 110 *if that ben't fair, hang fair.*

In Dan. we have corresponding expressions, such as: "Du må kalde mig Mads, om jeg gør det", cf. Holb. Arab. p. 1 *Jeg er aldrig ærlig, om det ikke er min gamle cammerat Andreas | Faber Stegek. 33 Jeg vil aldrig døe som en honnet kone, naar jeg de to sidste maaneder har hørt tale om andet end om politik.* — In a slightly different way Holb. Jeppe I. 6 *En skielm, der nu har flere penger (= jeg har ikke flere p.).*

By a further development the main clause may be left out entirely, and an isolated *if I ever heard* comes to mean 'I never heard', and *if it isn't a pity* comes to mean 'it is a pity'. There is a parallel in French *argot*, where *tu parles s'il est venu* is an emphatic way of saying 'il n'est pas venu'. English examples: Eastw. 444 *as I am a lady, if he did not make me blush so that mine eyes stood a water [= he made me b.] | Richardson G. 50 Mercy! if ever I heard the like from a lady | Di N. 127 I declare if it isn't a pity | GE. A. 65 If there isn't Captain Donnithorne a-coming into the yard! | Hardy T. 13 Why, Tess, if there isn't thy father riding hwome in a carriage | Gissing G. 196 'Now if this isn't too bad!' he exclaimed in a thick voice. 'If this isn't monstrously unkind!' | Ridge L. 252 'Pon me word, if this ain't what comes of trusting a woman | Shaw J. 102 Well, I'm sure! if this is English manners! | MacLaren A. 110 If 'Dr. D. isna comin' up the near road! (also 47, 107, 169) | Doyle NP. 1895 'Well, if this don't lick cock-fighting!' | London M. 276 My goodness! — if I ain't all tired a'ready! | Jerrold C. 56 Well, if I've hardly patience to lie in the same bed!*

In Dan. and Norwegian with *om* very often preceded by some adverb of asseveration: *Næ, om jeg gjorde det! | Ibsen*



P. Gynt 195 De lovte før At spede lidt til. — Nej, om jeg gør! | id. Når vi døde v. 145 Kan du ikke mindes det nu længer? — Nej, så sandelig om jeg kan | Kielland Fort. 40 men nei saagu' om jeg ved, hvad jeg har gjort | Hørup 2. 267 men ved gud! om jeg vilde undvære oppositionen, ingen af os vilde undvære den | Niels Møller Kogl. 297 Og ja, så min sæl, om jeg ikke også ser William sidde derovre | Bang Haabl. sl. 357 Om det just er sundt at ligge og døse i saadan en hundekulde.

In the same way in German: Ob ich das verstehen kann! and in Dutch: Fr. v. Eeden Kl. Joh. 115 Of ik niet besta! Drommels goed. Cf. Fr. (with an oath) Droz Mons. 3 Du diable si je me souviens de son nom (see below on *the devil*).

As *if* is often used in the same way: B. Jo. 3. 154 "What college?" As if you knew not (= of couse you know). In the same way in other languages: Somom du ikke vidste det! | Als ob du es nicht wüsstest! | Comme si tu ne savais pas!

(3) In Roister 38 Hence both twaine. And let me see you play me such a part againe — *let me see you play* means the same as 'don't play'; a threatening "and I shall punish you" is left out after *let me see*, etc.

More often we have the imperative *see* (or *you see*) with an *if*-clause: *see if I don't* = 'I shall':

Sh. H4. B. II. 2. 77 see if the fat villain haue not transform'd him ape | Brontë P. 27 I see such a fine girl sitting in the corner . . . see if I don't get her for a partner in a jiffy! | Thack N. 529 Make your fortune, see if you won't | Trollope O. 137 now I'll get the day fixed; you see if I don't | Gissing G. 64 I shall rise to the occasion, see if I don't | Wells L. 94.

Exactly the same phrase is usual in Dan., see, e. g., DgF. nr. 390 Stat op, her Ioen, och gach her-ud!" "See, om ieg gjør!" sagde Ioen — whence Baggesen: "Kom ud, ridder Rap,

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til den øvrige flok!" "Ja see, om jeg gjør!" sagde Rap || Holb. Pol. kand. 5. 1 Du skal nok see, at bormester staaer paa pinde for dig | id. Masc. 1. 1 Du skal nok see, at det er saa lyst klokken fire i januarii maaned.

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(4) A somewhat similar phrase is *catch me doing it* = ['you won't catch me doing it' =] 'I shan't do it'; also with *at it*, *at that*; in the last quotation this is combined with the conditional way of expressing a negative: Swift P. 74 Catch him at that, and hang him | Di Do. 108 Catch you forgetting anything! | Di D. 104 Peggotty go away from you? I should like to catch her at it | Hughes T. 2. 127 Old Copas won't say a word — catch him | Shaw 1. 34 Catch him going down to collect his own rents! Not likely! || Fielding 5. 526 but if ever you catch me there again: for I was never so frightened in all my life.

With this may be compared the Dan. phrase with *lur*: Goldschm. Hjeml. 2. 767 Talen er det eneste, der adskiller os fra dyret: saa mangel fugl synger poesi: men lur den, om den kan holde en tale, men det kan jeg! | Hørup 2. 105 bladet anmodede i fredags Hørup om at tænke resten. Men lur ham, om han gør.

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(5) *Excuse my (me) doing* is sometimes used in the positive sense 'forgive me for doing', but not unfrequently in the negative sense 'forgive me for not doing'. Examples of the latter (cf. NED. *excuse* 8, only one example (1726) of *-ing*): Hazlitt A. 108 she said she hoped I should excuse Sarah's coming up | Scott O. 76 you will excuse my saying any thing that will criminate myself | Di F. 28 You must excuse my telling you [= I won't] | Kingsley Y. 64 Excuse my rising, gentlemen, but I am very weak | Philips L. 64 you must excuse my saying anything more on the subject at the present moment.

(6) Ironical phrases implying incredulity (= 'I don't believe what you are just saying') are frequent in colloquial and jocular speech, thus: Go and tell the marines! | Ridge G. 291 That's my father. 'Go along!' said cook incredulously | Norris P. 84 Oh, get out, protested the broker | ib. 86 Oh, come now | ib. 98 Ah, go to bed, protested H. — Similarly in Dan. Gå væk! | Den må du længere ud på landet med!

*Fiddlesticks* is used either by itself (= 'nonsense') or after a partial repetition of some words that one wants scornfully to reject: Jerrold C. 53 . . . twenty pounds. — Twenty fiddlesticks | Caine C. 351 'Good men have gone to the mission-field'. 'Mission fiddlesticks!'

Similar exclamations in other languages are Fr. *Des navets!* and G. *blech!* In Dan. *en god støvle* is said either by itself or after a verb: H. C. Andersen O. T. 1. 88 Vilhelm forsikrede, at man maatte opfriskes lidt efter den megen læsning. "Ja, De læser nok en god støvle!" | Jacobsen N. Lyhne 299 han ligner Themistokles . . . Pyt, Themistokles, en god støvle! | Hørup 2. 228 Det viser dog "en ærlig og redelig vilje". Det viser en god støvle, gør det.

Among other rebuffs implying a negative may be mentioned Dan. *på det lag!* | *snak om en ting!* | Fr. *Plus souvent!* (Halévy Notes 247, frequent).

Swift in the same sense uses a word which is now considered very low: J. 57 they promise me letters to the two archbishops here; but mine a— for it all | ib. 61. Thus also formerly in Dan., see Ranch Skuesp. 322 Min fromme Knepe, kand du mig kiende? — O, kysz mig i min bagende!

(7) A frequent ironical way of expressing a negative is by placing a word like *much* in the beginning of a sentence: *Much I care* (Stevenson T. 27, Di F. 659, Wells H. 122) = 'I don't care (much)' | Di D. 8 Mr. Copperfield was teaching

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me — (Much he knew of it himself!) | Hardy W. 224 you yawned — much my company is to you | Galsworthy P. 3. 96 Much good that would have done | Shaw J. 114 Much good your pity will do it [England] | Id. P. 5 much good you are to wait up | Hope R. 37 Much you can do to stop 'em, old fellow | Kipling, J. 1. 230 A lot I should have cared whose fault it was | id. B. 58 Plucky lot she cared for idols when I kissed her where she stud! | Shaw J. 14 His brogue! A fat lot you know about brogues! | Hewlett Q. 117 She tossed her head, 'Fine he knows the heart of a lass'.

Similarly in Dan., for instance Fibiger Liv 236 han trak spottende paa skuldren og sagde: Naa, det skal vel *stort* hjælpe | Ibsen Inger 98 Det skulde *stort* hjælpe, om jeg . . . | Niels Møller Kogl. 235 Det skulde hjælpe *fedt* | Matthiesen Stjerner 30 men *ligemeget* hjalp det.

There is a curious use of *fejl* as a negative, only with *bryde sig om*: Pal.-Müller Ad. H. 1. 142 Du bryder dig jo feil om eiermanden.

Among ironical expressions must also be mentioned Eng. *love* = 'nothing'. This, I take it, originated in the phrase "to marry for love, not for money", whence the common antithesis "for love or money". Then it was used extensively in the world of games, where it is now the usual word in counting the score, in tennis, for instance, "love fifteen", meaning that one party has nothing to the other's 15, in football "winning by two goals to love", etc. In this sense the Engl. word has become international in the terminology of some games.

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(8) *The devil* (also without the article) is frequently used as an indirect negative; cf. from other languages J. Grimm, *Personenwechsel in der Rede* p. 23 f. In English we have *the devil* joined either to a verb, or to a substantive (*the devil a*

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*word* = 'not a word'; *the devil a bit* = 'nothing'). There is a well-known little verse:

When the devil was ill, the devil a monk would be;

When the devil got well, *the devil a monk* was he.

(Sometimes quoted with *a saint* instead of *a monk*).

The following may serve as an illustration of the natural way in which the devil has come to play this part of a disguised negative: Black F. 184 Lady Rosamund is going to take a sketch of the luncheon party'. — 'Let her take a sketch of the devil!' said this very angry and inconsiderate papa.

Examples of *devil*, etc. with a verb:

Fielding T. 4. 174 the devil she won't [= she will] | Sheridan 11 Captain Absolute and Ensign Beverley are one and the same person. — The devil they are | ib. 242 she's in the room now. — The devil she is | ib. 256 | Trollope D. 2. 52 I was at that place at Richmond yesterday. 'The devil you were!' | id. O. 204 I am going back. — The devil you are | Hope M. 102 'I can't give you the money'. 'The devil you can't!' [= you can].

Examples of *devil* + subst. (in Sc. also with pronouns): Marlowe F. 766 My parents are al dead, and the diuel a peny they haue left me, but a bare pention | Sh. Tw. II. 3. 159 The diu'll a Puritane that hee is | Fielding 4. 290 and the devil a bird have I seen | Goldsmith 613 But now-a-days the devil a thing of their own . . . about them, except their faces | Di N. 76 Has nothing been heard? 'Devil a bit'. | Quiller-Couch M. 210 If she did not tell you . . . Tell me? Devil a bit of it | Scott A. 1. 21 it [the law-suit]'s been four times in afore the fifteen, and deil ony thing the wisest o' them could make o't | ib. 30 the deil a drap punch ye'se get here the day | ib. 31 the de'il ane wad hae stirred | ib. 341 de'il ony o' them daur hurt a hair o' auld Edie's head.

The following quotations exemplify more unusual employments (Irish?) of *devil* as a negative: Birmingham W. 6 Devil

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the other idea there is in your head this minute [= there is no other i.] | *ib.* 34 and devil the word I'll speak to Mr. Eccles on your behalf | *ib.* 185 They're good anchors. Devil the better you'd see.

In Scotch there is an idiomatic use of *deil* (or *fient*) *hae't* [= 'have it'] in the sense of a negative: Burns 1. 16 For thae frank, rantin, ramblin, billies, Fient haet o' them's [not one of them is] ill-hearted fellows | *ib.* 17 Tho' deil-haet ails them [nothing] | Scott A. 2. 348 What do you expect? . . . De'il hae't do I expect. This leads to a curious use of *hae't* = 'a bit, anything': She has-na a haed left; see NED. hate sb 2.

Instead of the word *devil*, (*the*) *deuce* is very often used in the same way; the word probably is identical with *deuce* from Fr. *deux*, OF. *deus*. to indicate the lowest, and therefore most unlucky, throw at dice, but is now felt as a milder synonym of *devil*.

Examples with the verb negated:

Housman J. 149 'I heard what you said'. 'The deuce you did!' | Mered R. 287 'Deuce he has' | Hope Z. 174 he lies in his room upstairs. — The deuce he does.

Examples with a substantive (or pronoun) negated: Swift J. 130 I thought to have been very wise; but the deuce a bit, the company stayed | Sterne 98 the deuce of any other rule have I to govern myself by | Hazlitt A. 38 she did beguile me of my tears, but the deuce a one did she shed | *ib.* 40 The deuce a bit more is there of it | Hardy R. 209 'Sit down, my good people'. But the deuce a bit would they sit down | Mered H. 468 | Shaw J. 38 Jeuce a word I ever heard of it | Hope Z. 37 if you stay here, the deuce a man [= nobody] will doubt of it.

Occasionally other words may be used as substitutes for *the devil* with negative purport: Di Do. 447 'You may give him up, mother. He'll not come here'. 'Death give him up. He *will* come here.' | Worth S. 238 But we're not mixed up

in the party fight. — The hell you're not! [= you are] | Scott A. 1. 145 but ne'er-be-licket could they find that was to their purpose.

In Irish *sorrow* (pronounced "sorra", [sɒrə]) is used as a synonym of the devil (see Joyce Ir. 70), also as a negative, cf. the following quotations: Buchanan F. 110 when he had to cross the mountains on an empty stomach to say Mass, and sorra a bite of bread or ship of water to stay his stomach | ib. 111 Anthony was all for books and book-learning: and sorra a colleen ever troubled the heart of him | ib. 114 Is there any more news? Sorra news, except that he's lying in the gaol | ib. 163 Do you think the intention was to hit the car?' 'Sorra doubt' | ib. 172 Did one of them think . . . Sorra one | Birmingham W. 308 Sorra the man in the town we'd rather be listening to than yourself | Quiller-Couch T. 181 [Irish lady:] Sam tells me sorra a sowl goes nigh ut | Ward D. 2. 113 He gets rid of one wife and saddles himself with another — sorrow a bit will he stop at home for either of them | ib. 3. 30 But sorrow a bit o' pity will you get out o' me, my boy — sorrow a bit.

The corresponding use of Da. *fanden* is extremely frequent in Holberg and later, see e. g. Holb. Er. Mont. 4. 2 jeg vil bevise af den sunde logica, at I er en tyr. — I skal bevise fanden | Ulyss. 2. 7 Havde jeg ikke været en politicus, saa havde jeg skiøttet fanden derom | Blicher 1. 43 Kan vi ikke sejle fra ham? . . . Fanden kan vi, svarte han | H. C. Andersen O. T. 1. 67 Jeg vidste fanden hvad det var | Pal.-Müller Ad. H. 1. 140 Jeg bryder fanden mig om eiermanden | Drachm. Forskr. 1. 195 De er virkelig født kommentator! — Jeg er fanden, er jeg | Bjørnson Guds v. 71 han brydde sig fanden om sang og solskin. Similarly with the synonym *djævelen*: Holb. Er. Mont. 4. 2 Jeg siger, at I er en hane, og skal bevise det . . . I skal bevise dievelen. This is not usual nowadays.

*Fanden* often stands for 'not I': Holb. Ulyss. Gid nu fanden staae her længer [= I won't], vi maa ogsaa have noget af byttet | Drachmann Kitzw. 85 Fanden forstaa sig paa kvind-folk! | Bang Ludvb. 38 Fanden véd, om det holder. — Thus also *satan*: Nexø Pelle 2. 129 Satan forstaa sig paa havet.

*Fanden* (*Satan*) *heller* is also used in a negative sense ('I would rather have the devil'), thus Blicher 3. 547, Goldschmidt Kol. 92.

Sometimes *fanden* is used simply to intensify an expressed negative: Wessel 204 "Gaae du til fanden!" Den anden Gik *fanden* ei til fanden | Juel-Hansen Ung. 186 og saa véd jeg *fanden* ikke, hvordan det gik til.

Two modern G. examples of *den teufel* = 'nicht' may suffice: Sudermann Fritzchen: Die fremden weiber gingen mich den teufel was an | "Im theaterstück sagt ein mann zu seiner stets keifenden, zanksüchtigen frau: "Ich weiss ja doch, dass ich einen sanften engel zur frau habe" — worauf sie mit artigem widerspruch schreit: "Den teufel hast du", wobei sie zunächst nur an widerspruch denkt, als ob sie sagen wollte "nein, gar nichts hast du" (Bruchmann, Psychol. studien zur sprachgesch. 172). For older examples, see Grimm, quoted above.

As *pox* (originally the name of a disease) was popularly used as a kind of substitute for the devil in imprecations, it can also be used in indirect negation, as in Swift J. 22 The Dean friendly! the Dean be poxed [= he is not].

In the same way Dan. *pokker* is used, as in Wessel 4 I kiørte pokker, I! og ikke til majoren | Topsøe Skitseb. 107 Han tror vistnok, at han gør mig en hel glæde . . . Han gør pokker, gør han | Hørup 2. 173 Han har pokker, har han! — Also with *heller*, as above: Kielland Jac. 67 Det retter sig med aarene. Det gjør pokker heller.



*God* [or *Heaven*] *knows* is in all languages a usual way of saying 'I don't know'; the underlying want of logic is brought out in Marlowe F. 200 wheres thy maister? — God in heauen knowes. — Why, dost not thou know? — Yes I know, but that followes not.

But inversely *Heaven knows* also serves as a strong asseveration, as in Di D. 786 "We were happy then, I think". "Heaven knows we were!" said I.

Elsewhere (Festskrift til Feilberg 1911 36) I have mentioned that in Dan. *gud veed* is used to express uncertainty, and *det veed gud*, certainty; cf. *Gud må vide om han er dum* (uncertainty), but *gud skal vide, han er dum* (certainty).

(9) Hypothetical clauses, like *if I were rich* (nowadays also in the indicative: *if I was rich*) or *if I had been rich* are often termed "clauses of rejected condition", but as it is not the condition that is rejected but that which is (or would be) dependent on the condition, (for instance, *I should travel*, or *I should have travelled*) a better name would be "clauses of rejecting condition". At any rate they express by the tense (and mood) that something is irreal, implying 'I am not rich'. — The negative idea may be strengthened in the same way as a pure negative, cf. Hope D. 202 What your poor wife would do if she cared *a button* for you, I don't know — implying: she does not care *a button* for you.

(10) There are other more or less indirect ways of expressing a negative, e.g. Scott A. 1. 65 recollections which were *any thing rather than* agreeable | Trollope W. 85 leaving her lover in *anything but* a happy state of mind | Di F. 275 it is *the reverse of* important to my position | Gissing B. 339 the constitution of his mind made it *the opposite of* natural for him to credit himself with . . . | I am *at a loss* to understand it.

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Cf. Dan. Drachm. Forskr. 2. 190 Der havde været tids-afsnit, hvor han laa *alt andet end* paa den lade side. — Below we shall see a further development of *andet end*.

On the whole it may be said that words like *other* (*otherwise, else, different*) in all languages are used as negative terms; cf. also "I had to decide upon the desirability or otherwise [= or the undesirability] of leaving him there".

Negation is also implied in expressions with *too* (she is too poor to give us anything = she cannot ...) and in all second members of a comparison after a comparative (she is richer than you think = you do not think that she is so rich as she really is); hence we understand the use of Fr. *ne* (elle est plus riche *que* vous *ne* croyez) and the development of negatives to signify 'than', as in Swift J. 499 you are more used to it *nor* I, as Mr. Raymond says | GE Mill 1. 6 and often *nor* as dialectal | Shaw C. 69 (vg) I'd sooner be a dog *nor* a trainer. See Holthausen IF. 32. 339 and for Slavonic Vondrák Vgl. gr. 2. 336.

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The indirect way of expressing the negative notion is responsible for a pretty frequent continuation with *much less* (which is practically synonymous with "not to speak of" and corresponds very nearly in many instances to Dan. *endsige*, G. *geschweige denn* to introduce a stronger expression), as in Browning 1. 395 How very long since I have thought Concerning — much less wished for — aught Beside the good of Italy [= I have not long thought ...] | Harrison R. 73 it would need long years, not a few crowded months, to master the history of Venice, much less that of Italy, for the whole Middle Ages [= it is impossible in the course of a few months] | id. [on Mark Pattison] Why did he ever write, much less publish, his memoirs? [= he should not have ...] | Hardy L. 46 Why were you so weak as to admit such an enemy to

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your house — one so obviously your evil genius — much less accept him as a husband? | ib. 201 a place of Dantesque gloom at this hour, which would have afforded secure hiding for a battery of artillery, much less a man and a child [= where you could not see . . . much less] | Zangwill in *Cosmopolis* '97. 619 the child thought it a marvellous feat to read it, much less know precisely how to chant it [= it was not easy . . .] | NP. 1907 Is it right to entrust the mental development of a single child, much less a class of children, to a man who is ignorant of mental science?

Thus also in Dan., e.g. Gravlund *Da. studier* 1909. 86 *hvem skulde ta sig det nær, langt mindre blive hidsig* | NP. '15 *Det er vistnok første gang, at han overhovedet har været i Rømersgade — langt mindre talt der.*

In a similar way we have *impossible* followed by *much less* = 'much less possible': London M. 314 It was impossible that this should be, much less in the labour ghetto south of Market | NP. 1914 it is impossible for a Prime Minister to follow, far less to supervise, the work of individual Ministers | Dobson F. 105 to make any extracts from it — still less to make any extracts which should do justice to it, is almost impracticable.

By a similar confusion Carlyle uses *much more*, because he is thinking of something like: "it is impossible for . . . to foster the growth of anything": S 73 How can an inanimate Gerund-grinder . . . foster the growth of anything; much more of Mind, which grows . . . by mysterious contact of Spirit?

*Much more* would have been more apposite than *much less* in London M 181 I loved you hard enough to melt the heart of a stone, much less the heart of the living, breathing woman you are.

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### B. Incomplete Negation.

Among *approximate negatives* we must first mention *hardly*, which from signifying 'with hardness, i.e. with difficulty' comes to mean 'almost not'; the negative import is shown by

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the possibility of strengthening *hardly* by adding *at all* (which is only found with negative expressions). In this sense *hardly* follows the general tendency to place negatives before the notion negated (see above, p. 5): *I hardly know*. Cf. Sweet, New E. Gr. § 1847 on the difference between *I hardly think we want a fire* and *to think hardly of a person*.

Corresponding words in other languages, like Dan. *vanskeligt*, G. *schwerlich*, Fr. *à peine*, also have approximately the value of a negative, though perhaps not quite so much as *hardly*.

*Scarcely* (obsolete adv. *scarce*) also is what the NED. terms "a restricted negative" (= 'not quite'); in the same way Dan. *knap*, *næppe*, *knebt*, G. *kaum*. — Note the use after words meaning *before* in (NED. quot. 1795) Recollection returned before I had scarcely written a line | Rolland J.-Chr. 1. 168 Avant de savoir à peine écrire ses lettres, il s'évertua à griffonner | Henrichsen Mænd fra forfatn.-kamp. 108 Og før han knap selv vidste deraf, gik Berg med en politiker i maven.

In English *scarcely any*, *scarcely ever* is generally preferred to the combinations *almost no*, *almost never*.

But *almost* with *no*, *nothing*, *never* is not quite so rare as most grammarians would have us think; it is perhaps more Scotch (and American) than British, hence Boswell (I 32\*) in later editions changed "I suppose there is almost no language" to "we scarcely know of a language". In the following quotations I have separated British, Scotch, and American examples by means of | : Gammer 104 here is almost no fier | Bacon, see Bøgholm p. 74 | Cowper L. 1. 188 I shall remember almost nothing of the matter | Austen M. 352 she has found almost nothing | Ward D. 2. 51 almost nothing definite (see also Storm E. Ph. 942) | Scott A. 2. 66 rights which are now rarely practised in Protestant countries, and almost never in Scotland Carlyle H. 75 open to all, seen by almost none id. F. 3. 62 Nothing, or almost nothing, is certain to me, except the Divine Infernal character of this universe | Buchanan. Father Anthony 97 On first entering I could see almost nothing James A. 1. 265 He himself was almost never bored | G. R. Carpenter The Teaching of English 44 the academies paid almost no attention whatever to English instruction.

*Little* and *few* are also incomplete negatives; note the frequent collocation with *no*: there is *little or no* danger |

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there have been *few or no* attempts at denial; note also the use of *yet* in Shelley Pr. 295 I have yet seen little of Florence. Other examples (the last with *little* before a pl.): Sh. John IV. 3. 3. There's few or none do know me | Wordsworth P. 3. 626 with few wise longings and but little love | Hope F. 38 the situation showed little signs of speedy development.

The negative force of *little* is seen very clearly when (like other negatives, see p. 5) it is placed before the verb. "This use is confined to the vbs. *know*, *think*, *care*, and synonyms of these" (NED. with examples so far back as 1200): Cowper L. 1. 352 I little thought, when I mounted him [John Gilpin] upon my Pegasus, that he would become so famous | Byron D. J. 5. 1 They little think what mischief is in hand | Scott A. 1. 21 I little thought to have seen your honour here | Kingsley H. 236 Little they thought how I was plotting for their amusement | Hope R. 205 He little knew the cause of what he saw. It may be mentioned for the curiosity of the thing that *little* and *much* (see above p. 30) mean exactly the same in *Little (much) she cares what I say*.

This negative *little* is frequent with verbs and adjectives, but rarer with substantives; in the following quotations we have it with verbal substantives, and *or* in the second shows clearly the negative value of *little*: Austen M. 55 reading in their minds their little approbation of a plan . . . | Carlyle R. 1. 294 as he or I had little interest in that.

While *little* and *few* are approximate negative, *a little* and *a few* are positive expressions: *he has little money* and *he has few friends* express the opposite of *much money* and *many friends* and therefore mean about the same thing as *no money* and *no friends*; but *he has a little money* and *he has a few friends*, generally with the verb stressed rather strongly, mean the opposite of *no money*, and *no friends*, thus nearly the same thing as *some money* and *some friends*. *Little* means 'less than you would expect', *a little* 'more than you would expect':

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Unfortunately, little is left of the former splendour | Fortunately, a little is still left of the former splendour | Unfortunately, there are few who think clearly | Fortunately there are a few who think clearly (note here the stress on *are*). Cf. below on *not a little, not a few*.

Sh. uses *a few* in some cases, where now *few* would be used without the article e. g. All. I. 1. 73 Loue all, trust a few, Do wrong to none (see Al. Schmidt); the difference between *a little* and *little* is well brought out in Sh. Merch. I. 2. 95 when he is best, he is a little worse than a man, and when he is worst, he is little better than a beast. — On the other hand *little* is positive in “love me *little* and love me long” (mentioned as a proverb as early as 1548, NED.).

Note the different idioms with the two synonyms *but* and *only*: there is *but little* difference = there is *only a little* difference | there are *but few* traces left = there are *only a few* traces left. — See e. g. Sh. Ado. I. 1. 7 How many gentlemen have you lost in this action? But few of any sort, and none of name | NP. 1917 The fog has lifted only a little; only a few big landmarks are yet visible | Bunyan P. 156 For but few of them that begin to come hither, do shew their face on these mountains | Merriman S. 124 a passion such as a few only are capable of attaining.

In America *a little* is to such an extent felt as a positive term that it can be strengthened by *quite*: *quite a little* means nearly the same thing as ‘a good deal’, and *quite a few* as ‘a good many’. This is rare in England, see Wells Br. 264 In quite a little time Mrs. Britling’s mind had adapted itself.

Practically the same distinction as between *little* and *a little* is made between Fr. *peu* and *un peu*, It. and Sp. *poco* and *un poco*, G. (MHG.) *wenig* and *ein wenig*. Has this developed independently in each language? In Dan. the corresponding differentiation has been effected in another way: *lidet*

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(literary) or generally *kun lidt* = 'little', *lidt* or very often *en smule* = 'a little'.

*Small* has not exactly the same negative force as its synonym *little*, cf. however Caine C. 36 Small thanks you get for it either — where *either* is due to the negative notion. Cf. also *slight* in Gissing B. 366 she had slight hope that any other caller would appear.

The comparative of *little* has a negative meaning, especially in the old combination OE *þy læs þe*, which has become *lest* and is the equivalent of 'that not'. (With a following *not* it means the positive 'in order that' as in Sh. Merch III. 2. 7 But least you should not vnderstand me well, I would detain you here some month or two). With this should be compared the Lat. *minus* in *quo minus* and *si minus*.

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## CHAPTER V

### Special and Nexal Negation.

The negative notion may belong logically either to one definite idea or to the combination of two ideas (what is here called the nexus).

The first, or special, negation may be expressed either by some modification of the word, generally a prefix, as in

*never* (etc., see p. 12)  
*unhappy*  
*impossible*, *inhuman*, *incompetent*  
*disorder*  
*non-belligerent*

(See on these prefixes ch. XIII) —

or else by the addition of *not* (*not happy*) or *no* (*no longer*). Besides there seem to be some words with inherent negative meaning though positive in form: compare pairs like

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<i>absent</i>	<i>present</i>
<i>fail</i>	<i>succeed</i>
<i>lack</i>	<i>have</i>
<i>forget</i>	<i>remember</i>
<i>exclude</i>	<i>include.</i>

But though we naturally look upon the former in each of these pairs as the negative (*fail* = *not succeed*), nothing hinders us from logically inverting the order (*succeed* = *not fail*). These words, therefore, cannot properly be classed with such formally negative words as *unhappy*, etc.

A simple example of negatived nexus is *he doesn't come*: it is the combination of the two positive ideas *he* and *coming* which is negatived. If we say *he doesn't come today*, we negative the combination of the two ideas *he* and *coming today*; compare, on the other hand, *he comes, but not today*, where it is only the temporal idea *today* that is negatived.

Though the distinction between special and nexal negation is clear enough in principle, it is not always easy in practice to distinguish the two kinds, which accounts for some phenomena to be discussed in detail below. In the sentence "he doesn't smoke cigars" it seems natural to speak of a negative nexus, but if we add "only cigarettes", we see that it is possible to understand it as "he smokes, but not cigars, only cigarettes".

Similarly, it seems to be of no importance whether we look upon one notion only or the whole nexus as being negatived in *she is not happy* = 'she is (positive) not-happy' or 'she is not (negative nexus) happy'; thus also *it is not possible to see it*, etc. In these cases there is a tendency to attract *not* to the verb: *she isn't happy, it isn't possible to see it*, but there is scarcely any difference between these expressions and *she is unhappy, it is impossible to see it*, though the latter are somewhat stronger. If, however, we add a subjunct like *very*,



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we see a great difference between *she isn't very happy* and *she is very unhappy*.

The nexus is negated in *Many of us didn't want the war*, but many others did (NP. '17) — which rejects the combination of the two ideas *many of us* and *want the war* and thus predicates something (though something negative) about *many of us*. But in *Not many of us wanted the war* we have a special negative belonging to *many of us* and making that into *few of us*; and about these it is predicated that they wanted the war. Cf. below ch. VIII on *not all*, *all . . . not*.

Note also the difference between *the disorder was perfect* (*order* negated) and *the order was not perfect* (nexus negated, which amounts to the same thing as: *perfect* negated).

In a sentence like *he won't kill me* it is the nexus (between the subject *he* and the predicate *will kill me*) that is negated, even though it is possible by laying extra emphasis on one of the words seemingly to negative the corresponding notion; for "*he won't kill me*" is not = 'not-he will kill me', nor is "*he won't kill me*" = 'he will do the reverse of killing me', etc.

Cf. also the following passage from Stanley Jevons, *Elem. Lessons in Logic*, p. 175: — "It is curious to observe how many and various may be the meanings attributable to be same sentence according as emphasis is thrown upon one word or another. Thus the sentence 'The study of Logic is not supposed to communicate a knowledge of many useful facts,' may be made to imply that the study of Logic *does* communicate such a knowledge although it is not supposed to; or that it communicates a knowledge of a *few* useful facts; or that it communicates a knowledge of many *useless* facts".

There is a general tendency to use nexal negation wherever it is possible (though we shall later on see another tendency that in many cases counteracts this one); and as the (finite) verb is the linguistic bearer of a nexus, at any rate in all complete sentences, we therefore always find a strong tendency to attract the negative to the verb. We see this in the prefixed *ne* in Fr. as well as in OE, and also in the suffixed *-n't* in Mod. E., which will be dealt with in chapter XI, and

in the suffixed *ikke* in modern Norwegian, as in “Er ikke (erke) det fint?” and “Vil-ikke De komme?”, where Dan. has the older word-order “Er det ikke fint?” and “Vil De ikke komme?”. — In Mod. E. the use or non-use of the auxiliary *do* serves in many, but not of course in all, cases to distinguish between nexal and special negation; thus we have special negation in Shaw 1. 160 He seems *not certain* of his way.

In French we have a distinction which is somewhat analogous to that between nexal and special negation, namely that between *pas de* and *pas du*: je ne bois pas de vin ceci n'est pas du vin, c'est du vinaigre, see the full treatment in Storm, *Større fransk syntax*, 1911 p. 87 ff. Good examples are found in Rolland JChr. 9. 192 ce n'était plus de la poésie, ce n'était pas de la prose, c'était de la poésie, mise en prose; but ib. 197 Il n'y a pas d'amour, pas de haine, pas d'amis, pas d'ennemis, pas de foi, pas de passion, pas de bien, pas de mal. — With the partitive force of *pas* with *de* should be compared the well-known use of the genitive for the object in Russian negative sentences and with *nēt* ‘there is not’, etc., also the use of the partitive case for the subject of a negative sentence in Finnish.

In the case of a contrast we have a special negation; hence the separation of *is* (with comparatively strong stress) and *not* in Macaulay E. 1. 41 the remedy is, not to remand him into his dungeon, but to accustom him to the rays of the sun. — *Do* is not used in such sentences as AV. Matt. 10. 34 I came not to send peace, but a sword | Wilde P. 135 my ruin came not from too great individualism of life, but from too little | Dickinson S. 14 We meet not in drawing-rooms, but in the hunting-field.

Even in such contrasted statements, however, the negative is very often attracted to the verb, which then takes *do*: we do not meet in the drawing-room, but in the hunting-field — the latter part being then equivalent to: but we meet in the hunting-field | I do not complain of your words, but of the tone in which they were uttered | I do not admire her face, but (I do admire) her voice | He didn't say that it was a shame, but that it was a pity | Tennyson 464 I did not come to curse thee, Guinevere (contrast not expressed).

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In such cases the OE verb naturally had no *ne* before it, see e. g. Beow. 338 *wen ic þæt ge for wlenco, nalles for wræcsiðum ac for higeþrymmum*, Hroðgar *sohton* | Bede IV. 3 *ðæt he nalæs to idelnesse, swa sume oðre, ac to gewinne, in ðæt mynster eode* . Apoll. 25 *ðe ic lufode na for galnesse ac for wisdomes*. The exception in Matt. 10. 34 *ne com ic sybbe to sendanne, ac swurd* — may be accounted for by the Latin word-order (*non veni pacem mittere, sed gladium*). But in Ælfric Hom. 1. 234 we have: *Ne getimode þam apostole Thome unforsceawodlice, þæt he ungeleaful wæs . . . , ac hit getimode þurh Goues forsceawunge* — where the meaning is: ‘it happened not-unprovidentially’, as shown by the indicative *wæs* and by the necessity of the repetition *hit getimode*. Cf. also the ME. version ed. by Paues 56 *For Christ ne sende noȝt me for to baptyze, bote for-to preche þe gospel* (= AV. 1. Cor. 1. 17 *For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel*).

Other examples of constructions in which *not* is referred to the verb instead of some other word (‘I stepped . . . not without’, ‘pay, not only’): Wordsworth P. 4. 16 *I did not step into the well-known boat Without a cordial greeting* | Hope Q. 132 *Don’t pay only the arrears, pay all you can* | Galsw. F. 332 *it doesn’t only concern myself*.

Note also: *We aren’t here to talk nonsense, but to act* — where the sentence “we aren’t here” in itself is a contradiction in terms. (Differently in “We are here, not to retire till compelled to do so” where *not* belongs more closely to what follows).

When the negation is attracted to the verb (in the form *n’t*), it occasions a cleaving of *never*, *ever* thus standing by itself. In writing the verbal form is sometimes separated in an unnatural way: “*Can she not ever write herself?*” (Hallam in Tennyson L. 1. 258), representing the spoken “*Can’t she ever . . .*”; and thus we get seemingly *not ever* = ‘never’ (different from

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the old *not ever* as in More U. 244, which meant 'not always'). Wells H. 422 You shan't touch those hostels ever again. Ever | Hope D. 40 I suppose you don't ever write to him? | Ward M. 242 I can't ever see that man again | Locke S. 269 Don't you ever go down beneath the surface of things? | Caine P. 219 so don't you ever be troubled about that || Sh. Hml. III. 2. 411 let not euer The soule of Nero enter this firme bosome | Shelley 83 A light around my steps which would not ever fade | Trollope D. 2. 40 Do you not ever go? | Shaw 1. 40 you shall not — not ever.

A special case of frequent occurrence is the rejection of something as the cause of or reason for something real, expressed in a negative form: "he is happy, not on account of his riches, but on account of his good health" expressed in this form "he is not (isn't) happy on account of his riches, but on account of his good health". It will easily be seen that "I didn't go because I was afraid" is ambiguous (I went and was not afraid, or, I did not go, and was afraid), and sentences like this are generally avoided by good stylists. In Di F. 348 Don't patronize *me*, Ma, because I can take care of myself — the clause gives the reason for the speaker not wanting to be patronized. Similarly Locke Ord 151 I have not drunk deep of life because I have been unathurst.

In the spoken language a distinction will usually be made between the two kinds of sentences by the tone, which rises on *call* in "I didn't call because I wanted to see her" (but for some other reason), while it falls on *call* in "I didn't call because I wanted to avoid her" (the reason for not calling).

In Mason R. 95 "You mustn't come whining back to me, because I won't have you" the clause indicates the reason for the prohibition. Thus frequently.

In other languages we have corresponding phenomena. Brandes's sentence (Tilskueren 1915. 52) "Napoleon handlede

ikke saadan, fordi han trængte til sine generaler" is ambiguous: and when Ernst Møller writes (Inderstyre 249, in speaking of "Christian Science"): "Men retningens magt opløses, som alt fremhævet, ikke fordi dens argumenter og læresætninger eftergås og optrævles; dens magt vil blive stående" — I suppose that most readers will misunderstand it as if *opløses* were to be taken in a positive sense: it would have been made clearer by a transposition: Men som alt fremhævet opløses retningens magt ikke . . .

Not unfrequently *not* is attracted to the verb in such a way that an adverb, which belongs to the whole proposition, is more or less awkwardly placed between words which should not properly be separated, as in Trollope D. 1. 76 you *are not probably* aware . . . (= probably you are not aware, or: you are probably not aware) | Ward M. 228 were he at that moment Home Secretary, he *would not probably* be reading it | ead. E. 2 Edward M., however, *was not apparently* consoled by her remarks | NP. '17 This is a strong expression. Yet it *is not perhaps* exaggerated. — The tendency to draw the auxiliary and *not* together has, on the other hand, been resisted in the following passages: Shaw 1. 27 You *will of course not* meet him until he has spoken to me | id. D. 21 he *is clearly not* a prosperous man | Black Ph. 280 they *had clearly not* been unfavourable to him | Ward M. 133 a music-master, whose blood *was certainly not* Christian | Galsw. P. 55 It's *simply not* fair to other people (= is simply unfair) | Wells H. 120 the smashing up of the Burnet family was *disagreeably not in the picture* of these suppositions. — In most of these, *not* evidently is a special negative, belonging to the following word.

It has sometimes been said that the combination *he cannot possibly come* is illogical; *not* is here taken to the verb *can*, while in Danish and German the negative is referred to *pos-*

*sibly*: "han kan umuligt komme", "er kann unmöglich kommen". There is nothing illogical in either expression, but only redundancy: the notion of possibility is expressed twice, in the verb and in the adverb, and it is immaterial to which of these the negative notion is attached.

When *not* is taken with some special word, it becomes possible to use the adverb *still*, which is only found in positive sentences. *The officers were still not friendly* (NP. '17) is different from *the officers were not yet friendly* (*not yet* nexal negative) in so far as the latter presupposes a change having occurred after that time, which the former does not. Cf. also Letter '99 Although I wrote to him a fortnight ago, I have still not heard from him | Swift J. 503 my head is still in no good order (= 'is still bad', slightly different from *is not yet well*).

*Yet not* is rare: Johnson R. 112 P. was yet not satisfied.

*Not a* or *not one* before a substantive (very often *word*) is a kind of stronger *no*: at any rate the two words may be treated as belonging closely together, i. e. as an instance of special negative, the verb consequently taking no auxiliary *do*: cf. MEG. II. 16. 73, where many examples are given; see further:

Austen M. 395 say not a word of it | Hawthorne Sn. 46 the face seemed to smile, but answered not a word | Hardy R. 356 he mentioned not a word | Bennett B. 66 she said not a word about that interview | Doyle S. 5. 230 he lost not an hour in breaking with the murderer.

In a similar way *not* is attracted to *the least*, *the slightest*, and in recent usage *at all*, as shown by the absence of the auxiliary *do*: Swift 3. 200 his Majesty took not the least notice of us | Trollope W. 243 my resignation of the wardenship need offer not the slightest bar to its occupation by another person | Phillpotts M. 350 he rested but two hours and slept

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not at all | Wells L. 65 an urgency that helped him not at all | Quiller-Couch M. 59 this explanation enlightened the Commandant not at all | Galsw F. 209 they talked not at all for a long time. — Cf. *ib.* 415 he cared not the snap of one of his thin, yellow fingers.

Where we have a verb connected with an infinitive, it is often of great importance whether the negation refers to the nexus (main verb) or to the infinitive. In the earlier stages of the language this was not always clear: *he tried not to look that way* was ambiguous; now the introduction of *do* as the auxiliary of a negative nexus has rendered a differentiation possible: *he did not try to look that way* | *he tried not to look that way*; and the (not yet recognized) placing of *not* after *to* serves to make the latter sentence even more unambiguous: *he tried to not look that way*. The distinction is clear in Bennett W. 2. 187 *She did not wish to reflect; she strongly wished not to reflect*.

Other examples with *not* belonging to an infinitive: Di D. 112 *Try not to do it again* | *ib.* 432 *Try not to associate* bodily defects with mental | *id.* X 20 the more he *endeavour'd not to think*, the more he thought | Macaulay E. 1. 41 the fool who *resolved not to go* into the water till he had learnt to swim | Hope In. 38 Tommy *deserved not to be hated* | Black Ph. 61 if one were to live always among those bright colours, one would *get not to see* them | Galsworthy P. 6. 91 I soon *got not to care* | Swinburne L. 158 I may *come not to feel* such unbearable shame as I do now | Ward D. 3. 132 I knew he'd *come not to care* about the book-selling || Thack V. 200 I beseech you before you go, not perhaps to return, once more to let me press the hand | Mac Carthy 2. 521 the Prime-minister was too much absorbed in the zeal of his cause not sometimes to run counter to the feelings of men || Mrs. Carlyle F. 3. 24 I

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wished to not treat you to more tears |, Hope D. 94 I might not have gone. I might easily not have gone (cf. above p. 48 and ch. VIII below).

When *do* cannot be used, it is not always easy to see whether *not* belongs to the main verb or the infinitive, as in Sh. Merch III 2. 230 My purpose was not to haue seen you heere — where, however, the next line shows that what is meant is 'it was not my purpose to have seen you here', and not 'it was my purpose not to have...' This paraphrase further serves to show that in some cases word-order may remove any doubt as to the belonging of the negative, thus very often with a predicative; cf. also such frequent cases as Locke S. 232 He was beginning not to despise the day of small things. And in the spoken language the use of *wasn't* [wɒznt] in one case, and unstressed *was* [wəz] followed by a strongly stressed *not* in the other, will at once make the meaning clear of such sentences as the one first quoted here.

*Don't let us* is the idiomatic expression, where logically it would be preferable to say *let us* with *not* to the infinitive (an injunction not to...): Thack P. 2. 213 Do not let us, however, be too prodigal of our pity.

In the old construction without *do* we see the same attraction of *not* to *let* (though the last two quotations show *not* placed with the infinitive): AV. John 19. 24 let not vs rent it | B. Jo. 3. 183 let not my behaviour seem rude | Congreve 255 let not the prospect of worldly lucre carry us beyond your judgment | Di N. 443 And let not those whose eyes have been accustomed to... suppose that... | Mered H. 219 let not another dare suspect it || Goldsmith 636 let us not add guilt to our misfortunes | Johnson R. 101 let us not imagine evil which we do not feel.

While now *not* is always in natural language placed before the infinitive it belongs to, there is a poetic or archaic way of placing it after the infinitive, as in Wordsworth 131 one object which you might pass by, Might see and notice *not* By 396 a continuance of



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enduring thought, Which then I can *resist not* Caine C. 59 God bless you, my son, . . . and when He smiles on you, may the frown of a man *affect you not*.

In other languages difficulties like those mentioned in English are obviated in different ways. Thus in Greek *mē* is used to negative an infinitive, while *ou* is used with a finite verb. In Dan. a certain number of combinations like *jeg beklager ikke at kunne hjælpe Dem* may be ambiguous, though less so in the spoken than in the printed form; but in some instances the colloquial use of a preposition shows where *ikke* belongs; instead of the literary *prøv ikke at se derhen* it is usual to say either *prøv ikke på at se derhen* or *prøv på ikke at se derhen*. There is another colloquial way out of the difficulty, by means of the verbal phrase *lade være* or rather *la vær*: *prøv at (å) la vær at (å) se derhen*. Thus also *du skal la vær å se derhen*, different from *du skal ikke se derhen*.

In Latin the place of *non* before the main verb or before the infinitive will generally suffice to make the meaning clear. Similarly in French: *il ne tâche pas de regarder* | *il tâche de ne pas regarder* | *il ne peut pas entendre* | *il peut ne pas entendre* — whence the possibility of saying *non potest non amare* | *il ne peut pas ne pas aimer* = Dan. *han kan ikke lade være at elske*, Eng. *he cannot but love, cannot help loving (cannot choose but love)*. Cf. below ch. VIII.

In this connexion I must mention an interesting phenomenon frequent in Russian; I take my examples from Holger Pedersen's *Russisk Læsebog* (København 1916) p. 12: *a pēt' už ne stal* 'but sing now he not began' which is explained as standing for the logical 'not-to-sing he began', i. e. 'he ceased to sing' | *ne vėlino étogo dēlat'* 'order is not given to do this' instead of the logical 'order is given not to do this', i. e. 'it is prohibited to do this'. Similarly with *dolžen*. But how comes it that the negative *ne* is in such expressions attached to the wrong word? There is another way of viewing these

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sentences, if we take the negative to mean not the contradictory, but the contrary term: *ne stal* 'did the opposite of beginning', i. e. 'ceased'; *ne velěno* 'the opposite of order, i. e. prohibition, is given'. And in Vondrák's *Vergleichende slavische Grammatik* (Göttingen 1908) 2. 400, I find: "mitunter wird der begriff des verbs nicht durch *ne* aufgehoben, sondern in sein gegenteil verwandelt: aksl. *nenaviděti* 'hassen' (b. *náviděti* 'lieben'), s. *něstati* 'verschwinden'.

This closely resembles a Greek idiom, see Kruger, *Griech. sprachlehre* 5th ed. § 67 1. a. 2.: "Einzelne begriffe werden besonders durch *ou* aufgehoben, ja zuweilen ins gegenteil verwandelt, wie *ou phēmi nego*, verneine . . . *ouk axiō* verlange dass nicht, *ouk eō veto*, verwehre, widerrate (auch erlaube nicht)." — Kühner, *Ausf. gr. d. griech. spr. v. Gerth* II. 2. 180: "litotes liegt vor, wenn *phēmi* die negation an sich zieht, die logisch richtiger beim abhängigen infinitive stehen würde: *ou phēmi toúto kalós ékhein nego* hoc bene se habere". Ib. p. 182 this is explained as change into the contrary: *ouk eō prohibeo . . . ou stérghō* odi . . . *ou sumbouleúō* dissuadeo.

As as "accusative with an infinitive" may be considered as a kind of dependent clause, the mention of Lat. *nego Gaium venisse* = 'I say that Gaius has not come' naturally leads us to the strong tendency found in many languages to attract to the main verb a negative which should logically belong to the dependent nexus. In many cases *I don't think he has come* and similar sentences really mean 'I think he has not come'; though *I hope (expect) he won't come* is more usual than the less logical *I do not hope (expect) he will come*, which is usual in Danish and German. and also, according to Joyce (*Ir.* 20) among the Irish, who will say, e.g. *It is not my wish that you should go to America at all*, by which is meant the positive assertion: 'It is my wish that you should not go', — as well as *I didn't pretend to understand what he said* for 'I pretended not to understand'.

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A few Scandinavian examples may be given of this tendency to insert the negative in the main sentence: Hostrup Genb. III. 6 saa vil jeg *aldrig* ønske, at du maa blive gift | Schandorff NP. '97 Jeg tror *ikke*, at mange har læst Brand og at færre har forstaaet den (note here the continuation, which shows that what is meant is: tror at ikke mange . . .) | Bjørnson Guds v. 21 Men det lot 'o [= hun] *ikke*, som 'o hørte | Strindb. Giftas 2. 134 Han trodde *icke* presterna voro annat än examinerade studenter och att deras besvärjelseord bara var mytologi (note also here the positive continuation).

Cf. from French Tobler's Verm. beitr. 1. 164 *il ne faut pas que tu meures*.

In English we must note the distinction between *I don't suppose* (*I am not afraid*), where the main nexus is negated, and *I suppose not* (*I am afraid not*) where the nexus is positive, but the object (a whole sentence understood) is negative; how old is this use of *not* for a whole sentence? Examples: Congreve 121 I'm afraid not | Di D. 93 Whether it ever came to my knowledge? I believe not directly'. — 'Well, you know not' | Di N. 311 'I am afraid you can't learn it'. — 'I am afraid not' | ib. 590 can you bear the thought of that? No, I should imagine not, indeed! | Trollope D. 2. 81 'I should not mind'. 'I dare say not, because you have nothing particular to say'. 'But I have something particular to say'. 'I hope not'. 'Why should you hope not?' | Kipling L. 217 I'll tell the boys. — Please not, old man | Conway C. 1 I believe I asked him to hold his tongue. — He says not.

Inversely we have a negative adverb standing for a whole main sentence, *not that* meaning "I do not say that" or "the reason is not that" as in Sh. Cæs. III. 2. 22 Not that I lou'd Cæsar lesse, but that I lou'd Rome more | Bunyan P. 113 Not that the heart can be good without knowledge | ib. 213 | Wilde In. 212 Not that I agree with everything I have

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said in this essay | Locke W. 309 Not that he had forgotten them. — We shall see in ch. XII the use of *not but (that)* and *not but what* in the same sense.

In other languages correspondingly: Ikke at han havde (or: skulde ha) glemt dem | nicht dass er sie vergessen hätte | Rolland J. Chr. 5. 306 Non pas qu'il parlât à personne

When we say ("He'll come back") *Not he!* it is not really *he* that is negated, but the nexus, although the predicative part of it is unexpressed; the exclamation is a complete equivalent of *He won't!* (with stress on *won't*). Examples (after || with the accusative used as a modern (vulgar or half-vulgar) 'disjointed' nominative):

Sh. H4. A. I. 2. 153 Who, I rob? I a theefe? Not I | Tp. III. 3. 42 | Err. V. 420 | Bunyan P. 142 Let us go see. Not I, said Christian | Carlyle S. 169 Were I a Steam-engine, wouldst thou take the trouble to tell lies of me? Not thou! | Di X. 30 Meg don't know what he likes. Not she! | Galsw F. 255 They wouldn't touch us . . . Not they | GE M. 44 'It'll perhaps rain cats and dogs to-morrow'. 'Not *it*' | Bennett W. 1. 263 Do you think it will last long? — Not it! | id. Cd. 244 | Wells T. 49 || id. V. 338 We shan't hang upon any misunderstanding. Not us | Austen S. 269 you were all in the same room together, were not you? 'No indeed! not us'.

In OE we have the corresponding *nic* in Wright-Wülcker, Voc. 1. 94 Wilt þu fon sumne hwæl? Nic | John, ed. Skeat 1. 21 spelt *níc* and *nyc*, 18. 17 spelt *nicc* and *nich*. This (with the positive counterpart *I*, which is probably the origin of *ay* = 'yes', and *ye we* in Caxton R. 58 wille ye doo this . . . ye we, lorde) closely resembles the French *naje* 'not I' (in the third person *nenil*) and the positive *oje* 'hoc ego' (in the third person *oïl*, *oui*), see Tobler K. Z. 23. 423, Verm. Beitr. 1. 1. G. Paris, Romania 7. 465.

## CHAPTER VI

### Negative Attraction.

While the preceding chapter has shown the universal tendency to attract the negative to the verb even where it logically belongs to some other word, there is another tendency to attract the negative notion to any word that can easily be made negative. In colloquial language the former is the stronger tendency, but in literary English the latter often predominates because it yields a more elegant expression. Thus to the colloquial "we didn't meet anybody" corresponds a more literary "we met nobody". Cf. also "union won't be an easy matter" and "union will be no easy matter".

In the following sentences the negative really belongs to the nexus and should therefore be placed with the verb: note especially the tag question in the last sentence (*have we?* as after a negative *we haven't got*): Scott Iv. 89 those of thy tribe give nothing for nothing [= don't give anything for nothing] | Hay B. 68 She was aware of having done nothing wrong | Hewlett Q. 50 she found that she could count certainly upon nobody | Hope R. 230 we ask him to do nothing against his cousin. We ask only his silence | Gilbert 90 she loves you so well that she has the heart to thwart you in nothing | GE M. 2. 114 we've got a glass of nothing in the house, have we? — In Defoe R. 2. 299 'tis none of my business, or any part of my design — the continuation with *or any* shows that the beginning is felt to be = 'it isn't any . . .' — Cf. also the examples MEG. II. 16. 74.

Thus is particularly frequent with *need*: Swift T. 25 of ladders I need say nothing | Goldsmith 24 you need be under no uneasiness | Scott A. 1. 63 ye need say nothing about that foolish story. — Cf. with a comparative: Swift J. 461 I need tell you no more | Di N. 125 We need detain you no longer.

A curious example is Darwin E. 93 the whole subject is

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so obscure, that I have succeeded in throwing hardly any light on it — where *hardly any* is used as a mitigated *no*; the logical expression would be: I have hardly succeeded in throwing any light.

Note also Galsworthy D. 101 to be able to do nothing [= unable to do anything] without hurting someone | Benson D. 50 you and I will go to the smoking-room, and talk about nothing at all subtle [= something that is not subtle] | Norris P. 183 I'm no Bear any longer [= am a Bear no longer].

Storm E. Ph. 694 has a few curious quotations like this from Marryat: O'Brien stated that we were officers, and *had no right* to be treated like common soldiers [= and had a right not to be treated].

This tendency leads to the use of combinations like *he was no ordinary boy* in preference to the unidiomatic *he was a not ordinary boy*; for examples see MEG. II. 16. 751.

Similarly in Spanish, Galdós, Doña Perfecta 39 Era un santo varón piadosa y de *no común* saber.

The attraction of the negative element is the reason why a pronoun like *ingen*, *ingenting*, *intet* is very often in Danish placed in a position which would be impossible in the case of a positive pronoun, but is the one required for the adverb *ikke*: *det fører ingenting til* [= *det fører ikke til noget*] | *det er ingen skade til* | *når man ingenting har*, or, more popularly, *når ingenting man har*, etc. Cf. also the following quotations, the last two or three of which are, perhaps, not quite natural, though the attraction in them is easy to understand: N. M. Petersen Afhdl. 4. 123 Ti man må ingen gøre uret | ib. 126 Det franske sprog har ingen fordærvet, men den franske gouvernante har gjort det | Goldschmidt Hjeml. 2. 841 lad pøblen intet mærke | J. P. Jacobsen 2. 406 Tage mærkede imidlertid ingen kølighed til | G. Bang Tilsk. 1902. 386 Den samme jordlod, som for 20 aar siden intet eller lidet udbytte gav,

fordi der intet eller lidet arbejde var nedlagt i dens drift |  
 Johs. Jørgensen NP. '15 Jeg veed ogsaa, at jeg intet af alt  
 dette har gjort selv | Ibsen Bygm. Soln. 204 for at jeg ingen-  
 ting andet skulde ha' at hæfte mig ved. — Bjørnson Det  
 flager 48 *de bærer over med ingen* would in natural Danish be  
 rather *bærer ingen over med*.

Whenever there is logically a possibility of attracting the  
 negative element to either of two words, there seems to be  
 a universal tendency to join it to the first. We may say "*no  
 one ever* saw him angry" or "*never did any one* see him angry",  
 but not "*any one never* saw him angry" nor "*ever did no one*  
 see him angry". In the same way in Dan. "*ingen har nogen-  
 sinde* set ham vred" or "*aldrig har nogen* set ham vred", but  
 not otherwise. Instead of "*no woman would ever* think of  
 that" it is impossible to say "*any woman would never* think  
 of that", though it is possible to say "*a woman would never*  
 think of that", because *no* is not (now) felt to be a combination  
 of the negative element and the indefinite article.

The negative is also attracted to the first word in the well-  
 known Latin combinations *nec quisquam* (not *et nemo*), *neque  
 ullus*, *nec unquam*: thus also *ne quis*, *ne quid*, etc., in clauses  
 of purpose. The same tendency is found also in combinations  
 like *without any danger* | *uden nogen fare* | *sine ullo periculo*,  
 where, however, English has sometimes *with no danger* (to  
 any one); cf. Ruskin Sel. I. 9 it is a spot which has all the  
 solemnity, with none of the savageness, of the Alps |  
 Williamson S. 231 she went out, with not another word or look.

It strikes one as contrary to this universal tendency to  
 find in OE poetry combinations in which *æfre* or *ænig* precedes  
 a verb with prefixed *ne*, as in Andreas 15 þær *ænig* þa git  
 Ellþeodigra eðles *ne* mihte Blædes brucan | 360 *Æfre* ic *ne*  
 hyrde | 377 *ænig* *ne* wende, þæt he lifgende land begete | 499,  
 553 etc. Ib. 493 both combined: swa ic *æfre ne* geseah *ænigne*  
 mann.

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When the negative is attracted to the subject, the sentence is often continued in such a way that the positive counterpart of the first subject must be understood. In ordinary life such sentences will cause no misunderstanding, and it is only the critical, or even hyper-critical, grammarian that sees anything wrong in them. Examples: Marlowe T. 1560 Not one should scape, but perish by our swords [= but all perish] | Sh. R. 3. I. 3. 213 I pray him That none of you may liue his naturall age, But by some vnlook'd accident cut off | Bunyan G. 147 none of them are hurtful, but loving and holy [= but they are . . .] | Merriman V. 265 no man may judge another by looking down upon him, but must needs descend into the crowd | Jacobs L. 51 Neither spoke, but lay silently listening [= both lay] | Benson D. 2. 130 Don't let any of us go to bed to-night, but see the morning come | Galsworthy P. 2. 51 Nobody'll get anything till eight, and then [they'll get] only cold shoulder | Miss Paton, Radcliffe Coll. Monographs 15. 23 None of these versions throw any further light upon the original form, and are therefore not important for our analysis [= These versions throw no . . .].

We find the same phenomenon with *few*, as that, too, has a negative purport:

Johnson R. 40 few of the princes had any wish to enlarge their bounds, but passed their lives in full conviction that they had all | Mulock H. 2. 152 Few thought of Jessop — only of themselves [= they thought only of . . .].

Similarly in the following quotations: *forget* = 'do not remember' (Cf. also Sh. John I. 1. 188); *unfrequented* = frequented by (of) no one: Di N. 607 I forget, without looking back to some old letters, whether it was my great grandfather | Carlyle R. 2. 317 I quite forget the details, only that I had a good deal of talk with him | Wilkins P. 67 the house vnfrequented, onely of their owne householde | Dickinson After the War 22 it is idle to consider how much territory may



come up for settlement, nor how it may be disposed of [*idle* = 'no use'].

Danish examples of sentences begun negatively and continued as if begun positively: Rask Prisskrift 97 Intet af de finniske sprog adskiller kjøen, hvori de ligne grønlandsken, men have ellers en vidtløftig deklinering | Povl Møller (in Vilh. Andersen 181) Ingen piil bliver længe hængende derved [ved hjertet], men flyver tvert igjennem | Goldschmidt 5. 186 ingen begivenhed havde interesse uden som del af hans indre historie eller fik kun ved den sin rette farve | id. 7. 507 Bare ingen vil skoptisere over mig, men lade mig have ro! | H. C. Andersen To baron. 2. 66 Intet betragtede han som tilfældigt, men som et led i den store kjæde | Molbech brev t. Brøchner 155 jeg havæ den tilfredsstillelse, at ikke en eneste af mine 10 tilhørere forlod mig, men holdt alle ud til den sidste time | Høffding St. humor 104 Intet menneskeligt forhold kan have værdi i sig selv, men har kun værdi, naar det bevidst underordnes . . . uendelighedssynspunktet | Feilberg Dania 5. 117 Når korn blev kørt hjem, drak ingen af sin egen flaske, men fik brændevin af manden | L. C. Nielsen Tilsk. '98. 694 jeg saa, at ingen elskede hende, men forførte hende og handlede ilde med hende | W. Johannsen Salmonsens 9. 184 Ingen af dem [teorierne] kan siges at være fyldestgørende og forbigeas derfor her | Ax. Sørensen Ariadnetråd 52 Ikke ên af hundrede læsere gør sig rede hvorfor, og vil også have nogen vanskelighed ved at indse grunden.

The following quotations are somewhat different: Holberg Er. Mont. IV. 2 Jeg kand skaffe attester fra hele byen, at jeg er ingen hane eller at nogen af mine forældre har været andet end christne mennesker | Aage Friis Politiken 6. 2. 06 Langt fra alle vil samstemme med prof. Steenstrup . . . men vil hellere slutte sig til Bricka's beskædne tvivl [= mange vil ikke . . .].

Thus also with Dan. *de færreste* [= de fleste . . . ikke]: NP. '92 de færreste af disse tropper er imidlertid bevæbnede

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med nye gode rifler, men nøjes med gamle flintebøsser | Arn-skov Tilsk. '14. 29 De færreste forstod meningen eller vilde ikke forstaa den.

*And* with a negative infinitive means the same thing as *without -ing*. This is felt to be perfectly natural in positive sentences (a), but there is a growing awkwardness about the construction in the following groups: negative sentences (b), interrogative sentences, generally equivalent to negative statements (c), and negative interrogative sentences (d); the sentence in (e) is, strictly speaking, quite unanalyzable. In "I couldn't see you, and not love you" (b) *couldn't* refers at the same time to *see you*, and to *not love you*, the latter in a way that would be quite unidiomatic if used by itself: "I couldn't not love you" (cf. Latin *non possum non amare*); we see that the expression is unimpeachable if we substitute: "Impossible (to see you and) not to love you". But it is difficult to apply the same test to all our quotations.

(a) Sh. Alls II. 5. 91 Strangers and foes do sunder, and not kisse | Sh. Lr. I. 1. 228 that glib and oylie art, To speak and purpose not.

(b) Di D. 570 I couldn't see you, and not love you | Di Do. 473 But he could not look at her, and not be afraid of her | Tenn. 342 I cannot love my lord and not his name | Stevenson M. 179 I could not live in a house where such a thing was conceivable, and not probe the matter home | Mer-riman S. 13 what are we to do? Can't bury the poor chap and say nothing about it | Henley B. 20 I could not live and not be true with him | Hardy W. 265 I must not stay here and do nothing || Stevenson A. 84 no one can read it and not be moved | Harraden F. 54 No one could have had such a splendid old father as I have, and not believe in the people.

(c) Buny P. 68 how can I go back from this, and not be hanged as a traitor? | Richardson G. 28 Who can touch pitch

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and not be defiled? | Shelley 457 how Shall I descend, and perish not? | Ward E. 244 But oh! — what we can bear and not die!

(d) Otway 224 May not a man then trifle out an hour With a kind woman and not wrong his calling? | Hardy W. 270 why can't you marry me, and live here with us, and not be a Methodist preacher any more?

(e) NP. 1911 I'm doing just as little as I can and not be punished [= without being punished].

Conditional conjunctions also have a strong attraction for the negative notion in many languages (cf. Lat. *nisi*, Dan. colloquial *hvis ikke (at) han kommer* instead of *hvis han ikke kommer*). Thus we have in English the negative conjunction *unless* (formerly *onles*, *onles that*) = 'if . . . not'; *lest* (OE *þy læs þe*) = 'that . . . not'; *for fear* often is equivalent to '(in order) that . . . not'; cf. also *but* (*but that*, *but what*), ch. XII; Dan. *medmindre*; Fr. *à moins que*, Sp. *á menos que*.

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## CHAPTER VII

### Double Negation.

When logicians insist that "two negatives make an affirmative" their rule is not corroborated by actual usage in most languages. But it would be wrong to divide languages into some that follow this rule and others that do not, for on closer inspection we find that in spite of great differences between languages in this respect there are certain underlying principles that hold good for all languages. We shall deal first with those instances in which the rule of the logi-

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cians is observed; and afterwards with those in which the final result of two negatives is in itself negative.

First, it seems to be a universal rule in all languages that *two negatives make an affirmative*, if both are special negatives attached to the same word: this generally happens in this way that *not* is placed before some word of negative import or containing a negative prefix. But it should be noted that the double negative always modifies the idea, for the result of the whole expression is somewhat different from the simple idea expressed positively. Thus *not without some doubt* is not exactly the same thing as *with some doubt*; *not uncommon* is weaker than *common*, and *not unhandsome* (Kipl. L. 246) than *handsome*, the psychological reason being that the *detour* through the two mutually destroying negatives weakens the mental energy of the hearer and implies on the part of the speaker a certain hesitation absent from the blunt, outspoken *common* or *handsome*. "Tis not vnknowne to you, Anthonio" (Sh. Merch. I. 1. 122) = 'you are to some extent aware'. — Assertion by negative of opposite is a common feature of English as spoken in Ireland (see Joyce, p. 16): "this little rasher will do you no harm" meaning it will do you good, "Paddy Walsh is no chicken now" meaning he is very old, etc. This is really on a par with "not untragic", "not unentitled to speak", "not unpromptly", etc. which abound in Carlyle (E. St. 6. 388); with him *not without* has become quite a mannerism for which he is taken to task by Sterling: not without ferocity, not without result, not without meditation, etc. etc.

A special instance of this detour is Lat. *non-nunquam*, *non-nulli*, on the meaning of which see ch. VIII.

Next, the result is positive if we have a nexal negative in a sentence containing an implied negative, as in *I do not deny*;

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this, of course, closely, resembles the first case. Here belong such frequent Fr. phrases as *il n'était pas sans être frappé par la différence*; the meaning of the round-about expression is 'you will readily understand that he was struck . . .'

In this place should, perhaps, be mentioned the Fr. *il n'y a pas que ça*, which means the opposite of *il n'y a que ça*, thus 'there is more than this'.

The negation of words like *nobody* resulting in the meaning of 'everybody' (*nemo non videt*) will be treated in ch. VIII.

Yet another way of affirming through a double negative is seen in Sh. Oth. II. 1. 120 For I am nothing, if not criticall. Henderson Burns 3. 297 The old Scots poets were nothing if not plain-spoken [= were pl.-sp. to a high degree]. — But this hardly belongs in this chapter.

If now we proceed to those cases in which *a repeated negative means, not an affirmative, but a negative*, we shall do well to separate different classes in which the psychological explanation is not exactly the same.

(1) In the first place we have instances of *double attraction*. Above we have seen the two tendencies, one to place the negative with the verb as nexal negative, and the other to amalgamate a negative element with some word capable of receiving a negative prefix. We have seen how now one, now the other of these tendencies prevails; but here we have to deal with those instances in which both are satisfied at once in popular speech, the result being sentences with double, or even treble or quadruple, negation.

This was the regular idiom in OE, so regular indeed that in the whole of Apollonius there is only one sentence containing *ne* with the verb in which we have another word that *might* take *n-* and does not (22 *ne ondræt þu ðe æniges þinges*), while there are 9 instances of *ne* + various forms of *nan*, 3 of *ne* + *naht* ('nothing' or 'not') and 15 of *ne* + some negative adverb begin-

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ning with *n-* (*nahwar*, *næfre*, *na*, *nader*). There are 40 instances of *ne* or *n-* with the verb without any other word that might take *n-*, and 4 of *na* as special negative without any verb. In this text there are no instances of treble or quadruple negation, but these are by no means rare in OE prose, as in *nan man nyste nan þing* | Boet. 102. 7 *ne nan neat nyste nænne andan ne nænne ege to oðrum*. In the same way in ME., e. g. Ch. A. 70 *He neuere yet no vileynye ne seyde* In al his lyf unto *no maner wight* | Recluse 200 *ne takeþ noþing to holde of noman ne of no womman, ne noither of the seruauantz ne bere non vncoup tales*.

Early MnE. examples of double negation:

Caxton B. 48 the harneis was hole, and *nought* dammaged of *nothyng* | id. R. 38 whan he coude *nowher none* see | ib. 84 *ne neuer* shal *none* be born fairer than she | More U. 238 they *neuer* make *none* with anye nacion [none i. e. leagues].

In Elizabethan English this kind of repeated negation is comparatively rare; from Sh. I have only two instances (but I may, of course, have overlooked others): Ro. III. 1. 58 I will *not* budge for *no* mans pleasure, I | Tw. II. 1. 171 I haue one heart, one bosome, and one truth, And that no woman has, nor *neuer none* Shall mistris be of it, saue I alone. — Bøgholm has one from Bacon: he was *never no* violent man. — I cannot explain how it is that this particular redundancy seems to disappear for two centuries; it can hardly be accidental that I have no examples from the beginning of the seventeenth to the end of the eighteenth century, when Pegge mentions this kind of "luxuriance" among the cockneys (I *don't* know *nothing* about it) and says that he has heard in Yorkshire, "No, I shall *not* do *no* such thing" and that a citizen is said to have enquired at a tavern, 'if *nobody* had seen *nothing* of *never-a* hat *nowhere's*?'"

Recent examples, put in the mouths of vulgar speakers (sometimes, no doubt, with some exaggeration of a tendency

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ridiculed at school, however natural in itself): Di D. 19 *Nobody* *never* went and hinted *no* such a thing, said Peggotty | Di Do. 279 all he [the butler] hopes is, he may *never* hear of *no* foreigner *never* boning *nothing* out of *no* travelling chariot | Thack P. 3. 85 We *never* thought of *nothing* wrong | GE M. 1. 327 There was *niver nobody* else gen (gave) me *nothin'* | Hardy W. 23 I *can't* do *nothing* without my staff | Shaw C. 24 you *won't* like to spar with *nobody* without youre well paid for it | Zangwill G. 209 No compensation *nowhere* for being cut off | Herrick M. 87 you *won't* lose *nothing* by it | ib. 89 there *won't* be *no* hung jury.

Cumulative negation exactly resembling that of OE was very frequent in MHG., e. g. diz *en-mac nu nieman* bewarn | nu *en-kan* ich *niemanne* gesagen | ir ougen diu *en-wurden nie* naz (Delbrück 6). This was continued in later centuries, though as in English it was counteracted by schoolmasters. Luther has "Wir sind *niemand nichts* schuldig" and Goethe "Man sieht, dass er an *nichts keinen* anteil nimmt", Schiller "alles ist partei und *nirgend kein* richter", etc. (Andresen, Sprachgebrauch u. sprachrichtigkeit 1912 209). This is particularly frequent in vulgar language. In O. Weise's *Unsere muttersprache* 1897 78 I find the following: "Die verneinung wird nachdrücklich wiederholt, damit sie recht ins gewicht fällt. In Angelys Fest der handwerker wird einem gesellen auf die frage: 'Hat keener schwamm?' nicht geantwortet; als er aber dann der frage die form giebt: 'Hat denn *keener keenen* schwamm *nuch*?' findet er gehör. Doch kann einer der anwesenden seinen unwillen darüber nicht zuruckhalten, dass er nicht gleich ordentlich deutsch geredet habe".

In Dan. similar expressions are extremely rare. El. Christine writes, Jammersm. 132 saa hand kiøbte *aldrig intet* for mig.

In Fr. *nul* with *ne* to the verb (*nul ne* vient | on *ne* le voit

*nulle* part) is a case in point, though now it is hardly felt to be different from the corresponding usage with *aucun*, which was originally positive, but has now acquired negative force, as we have seen above.

In Spanish repeated negation is not at all rare; I may quote Calderon Alcalde de Z. l. 545 *Estarémos, sin que nadie, Ni aun el mismo sol, no sepa De nosotros* | Galdós D. Perf. 23 Aquí *no* vienen *nunca* soldados.

Thus also in Slavonic languages; Delbrück, Synt. 2. 526 gives among the other instances Serbian *i nikto mu ne mogāše odgovoriti riječi* 'and nobody him not-could answer word'. In the first few pages of Boyer et Speranski, Manuel de la langue russe, I find: *i nikomú zla ne dělaem* | *ničegó ne berët* | *ne davāi že mužikú ničegó* | *Filipók ničegó ne skazál* | *na kryl'cé nikogó nēt*, etc.

In Greek, repeated negation is very frequent, see any grammar. Madvig, Græsk ordføjningslære § 209, quotes for instance from Platon: *Áneu toútou oudeis eis oudèn oudenòs àn humôn oudépote génoito áxios*.

In Hungarian (Magyar) we have corresponding phenomena, see J. Szinnyei, Ungarische sprachlehre 1912 § 119: Negative pronouns like *sénki* 'nobody', *sémmi* 'nothing' and pronominal adverbs like *séhol* 'nowhere', *séhogy* 'in no wise' are generally used in connexion with a negative particle or verbal form, e. g. *sénki sém volt ott* (or: *nem volt ott sénki*) 'there was nobody there' | *sémmit sém hallottam* (or: *ném hallottam sémmit*) 'I have heard nothing'. Sometimes there are three negative words in the same sentence: *nem felejték el semmit sem* 'I forget nothing'. Negative words begin with *s-* or *n-*.

Repeated negation is found in many other languages. I shall mention only a few examples from Bantu languages. In H. G. Guinness's "Mosaic History in the Congo Language" (London, Hodder and Stoughton, n. d.) I find, for example, *ka bena mambu mambiko* 'not there are words evil not' <sup>1</sup> *yetu*



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*katulendi kuba monako* 'we cannot them see not' | *karangidi kwandi wawubiko, kamonanga kwandi nganziko, kaba yelanga kwa-u ko* 'not did he evil not, not feeling he no pain, not they sick they not, etc. In D. Jones and S. T. Plaatje, *A Sechuana Reader* (London 1916) p. 15 a sentence translated 'not will-not you-be-destroyed by-nothing'; other examples occur p. 33, 41.

Various explanations have been given of this phenomenon, but they mostly fail through not recognizing that this kind of repeated negation is really different from that found, for instance, when in Lat. *non* is followed by *ne . . . quidem*; this will form our second class, but the explanation from "supplementary negation" (*ergänzungsnegation*), which is there all right, does not hold in the cases here considered. Van Ginneken is right when he criticizes (*Principes de linguistique psychol.* 200) the view of Romance scholars, who speak of a "half-negation" (*demi-négation*) — an expression which may be more true of Fr. *ne* than of other negatives, but even there is not quite to the point. Van Ginneken's own explanation is that "negation in natural language is not logical negation, but the expression of a feeling of resistance". He goes on to say: "L'adhésion négative logique ou mathématique (dont deux se compensent) est leur signification figurée, née seulement dans quelques centres de civilisation isolés; jamais et nulle part elle n'a pénétré dans le domaine populaire". It is true that if we look upon *not*, etc., as expressing nothing but resistance, it is easy to see why such an element should be repeated over and over again in a sentence as the most effective way of resisting; but I very much doubt the primitivity of such an idea, and the theory looks suspiciously as having been invented, not from any knowledge of the natural mind of people in general, but from a desire to explain the grammatical phenomenon in question. I cannot imagine that when

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one of our primitive ancestors said "he does not sleep", he understood this as meaning "let us resist the idea of sleep in connexion with him" — or how is otherwise the idea of resistance to come in here? I rather imagine he understood it exactly as we do nowadays.

But I quite agree with v. Ginneken, when he emphasizes the emotional character of repeated negation; already H. Ziemer, *Junggrammatische streifzüge*, 1883, p. 142 says in this connexion: "Der sondernde, unterscheidende verstand blieb bei ihrer bildung ganz aus dem spiel, während das erregte gefühl und der auf den eindruck gerichtete trieb frei schaltete" (though Mourek is probably right when he says that the strengthening is a result, rather than the motive, of the repetition). I may also, like v. Ginneken, quote with approval Cauer's clever remark: "das negative vorzeichen ist, allerdings höchst unmathematisch, zugleich vor und in der klammer gesetzt, indem sich die negative stimmung über den ganzen gedanken verbreitet".

There is one theory that has enjoyed a certain vogue of late years (though it is not mentioned by v. Ginneken) and which I must deal with a little more in detail. It was started by Gebauer with regard to Old Bohemian, but was made better known through Mourek's work on negation in MHG. (*Königl. böhm. gesellschaft der wissenschaften* 1902) and has been faithfully repeated in the above-named works on Old English by Knörk, Rauert and Einkenel. These writers go back to Kant's table of categories, where the three categories of "position (or realität), negation, limitation" are ranged under the heading of "qualität", while under the heading of "quantität" we find the three "einheit, vielheit, allheit". This leads to the distinction between qualitative and quantitative negation: in the former the verb and by that means the whole sentence (die ganze aussage) is negated, while in the latter only one part of the sentence is negated. As

examples of qualitative negation are given "the man is not truly happy" and "my guests have not arrived"; of quantitative negation "no man is truly happy, the man is never truly happy, the man is nowhere truly happy" (I translate *der mensch* as *the man*, though perhaps the generic *man* is meant) and "none of my guests have arrived, I see nowhere any of my guests". Now the supposition is that language started by having qualitative and quantitative negation separately, and that later the combination of both was arrived at in some languages, such as MHG. and OE, and this is looked upon as representing a higher and more logical stage. "Diese art der negation beruht auf der rein logischen forderung, dass, wenn ein satzteil quantitativ verneint auftritt, der ganze inhalt des satzes qualitativ verneint wird. Dies sei an einem beispiel verdeutlicht: *ne mæg nan man twam hlaforðum hieran*. In diesem satz wird ausgesagt, dass kein mensch zwei herren zugleich dienen kann. Wenn sich nun kein mensch findet, der 2 herren zugleich dienen kann, so kann eben nicht mehr von einem "können", sondern logischerweise nur von einem "nicht können" die rede sein, daher in dem angeführten satz ganz richtig bei *mæg* "ne" steht". (Rauert 76). — To this line of reasoning several observations naturally offer themselves. Kant's table of categories is not unobjectionable, and in ch. VIII I shall venture to propose an improvement on the tripartition of *einheit*, *vielheit*, *allheit*. Kant does not look upon negation as sometimes qualitative and sometimes quantitative, but thinks it always qualitative. It would seem to be more logical to consider it as always quantitative; for even in such a simple sentence as "he does not sleep" we indicate the amount of sleep he obtains, though it is true that the amount is = 0. The true distinction between the two kinds of sentences cited does not, then, depend on two kinds of negation, as this is everywhere the same, but on two kinds of ideas negated. In the so-called "qualitative"

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negation the idea negated is in itself non-quantitative, while in the other it is in itself quantitative, for *none*, *never* and *nowhere* negative *one* (or *any*), *ever*, and *anywhere* respectively, and these are all quantitative terms. But however this may be, it is curious here to find that language ranged highest that explicitly indicates the negativity of the sentence containing a quantitative negation (a negated quantity); for if it is logically self-evident that such sentences are in themselves negative, why should it need to be expressed? And if some nations are praised because they have reached this high stage of logical development that they have understood the distinction between qualitative and quantitative negation and have been able to combine both, it seems rather sad that they should later on have lost that faculty, as the Germans and the English have (at any rate the educated classes), for they say "kein mensch kann zwei herren dienen" and "no man can serve two masters". Cf. also Delbrück's criticism of the same theory from partly different points of view, which I need not repeat here (Neg. sätze 36 ff.). — We note incidentally the curious fact that the "logically highest" standpoint in this theory is exactly the reverse of what it was in v. Ginneken's.

My own pet theory is that neither is right; logically one negative suffices, but two or three in the same sentence cannot be termed illogical; they are simply a redundancy, that may be superfluous from a stylistic point of view, just as any repetition in a positive sentence (every and any, always and on all occasions, etc.), but is otherwise unobjectionable. Double negation arises because under the influence of a strong feeling the two tendencies specified above, one to attract the negative to the verb as nexal negative, and the other to prefix it to some other word capable of receiving this element, may both be gratified in the same sentence. But repeated negation seems to become a habitual phenomenon only in those languages in which the ordinary negative element is comparatively

small in regard to phonetic bulk, as *ne* and *n-* in OE and Russian, *en* and *n-* in MHG., *ou* (sounded *u*) in Greek, *s-* or *n-* in Magyar. The insignificance of these elements makes it desirable to multiply them so as to prevent their being overlooked. Hence also the comparative infrequency of this repetition in English and German, after the fuller negatives *not* and *nicht* have been thoroughly established --- though, as already stated, the logic of the schools and the influence of Latin has had some share in restricting the tendency to this particular kind of redundancy. It might, however, finally be said that it requires greater mental energy to content oneself with one negative, which has to be remembered during the whole length of the utterance both by the speaker and by the hearer, than to repeat the negative idea (and have it repeated) whenever an occasion offers itself.

(2) A second class comprises what may be termed *resumptive negation*, the characteristic of which is that after a negative sentence has been completed, something is added in a negative form with the obvious result that the negative effect is heightened. This is covered by Delbruck's expression "ergänzungs-negation". In its pure form the supplementary negative is added outside the frame of the first sentence, generally as an afterthought, as in "I shall never do it, not under any circumstances, not on any condition, neither at home nor abroad", etc. A Danish example from Kierkegaard (2 eth-rel. smaa-afh. 41) is: "saa afskyeligt har aldrig, aldrig nogensinde (,) ikke den værste tyrann handlet". But as no limits of sentences can be drawn with absolute certainty, the supplementary negative may be felt as belonging within the sentence, which accordingly comes to contain two negatives. This is the case in a popular Swedish idiom, in which the sentence begins and ends with *inte*, as in Strindberg Röda r. 283 *Inte ha vi några asigter inte!* ! Wägner Nortullsl. 108 *Inte märkte han mig inte*. Similarly in a Greek instance like Od. 3. 27, where the

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second *ou* might be placed between two commas: "ou gâr oîô Oû se theôn aékēti genésthai te traphémēn te". On account of the difficulty of telling whether we have two sentences or a sentence with a tag it may sometimes be doubtful whether we have to do with this or the preceding class, as in Sh. As. II. 4. 8 "I cannot goe no further", which might be divided: "I cannot go, no further".

The most important instances of this class are those in which *not* is followed by a disjunctive combination with *neither . . . nor* or a restrictive addition with *not even*: "he cannot sleep, neither at night nor in the daytime | he cannot sleep, not even after taking an opiate" | Bunyan P. 80 he had not the discretion neither to stop his ears, nor to know . . . etc. Cf. also Locke S. 174 You'll do no such thing, not till you've told me about the flat.

In the same way in other languages, e. g. Lat. *non . . . neque . . . neque, non . . . ne . . . quidem*, Gr. *ou . . . oudé . . . oudé* etc. Examples are needless. (In Dan. also with insertion of *ikke* in the main sentence, Christiansen Fædrel. 135 Jeg troer ikke, at hverken De eller jeg skal tage nogen bestemmelse).

It is perhaps in consequence of the scholastic disinclination to repeated negation that some modern writers use *even* instead of *not even*, as in Shaw 1.182 I *cannot* give my Vivie up, *even* for your sake. — A few similar examples are given by Bogholm, Anglia n. f. 26. 511.

I am inclined to reckon among the cases of resumption (with the last negative originally outside the sentence) also the repetition *it' ikke* or *itik*, which in various phonetic forms is very frequent in Danish dialects (Seeland, Fyn, some of the southern islands, some parts of Jutland); Feilberg also in his dictionary quotes from various places in Jutland the combination *ik hæjer it* and from Fjølde *oller ek* (aldrig ikke: for the exact phonetic form I refer to the dictionary). — In colloquial Dan. we have also an emphatic negative [*gu gør*

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jeg] *ikke nikke nej*, where *nikke*, which is otherwise unknown, is a contanination of *ikke* and *nej*. In literature I have found this only in Nexø Pelle Er. 3. 19 Pipmanden havde delirium. Gu' ha'de jeg ikke nikke nej!

An English case of special interest is with *hardly* (on the negative value of this see p. 38) in combination with a preceding negative word, which is felt to be too absolute and is therefore softened down by the addition; the two negatives thus in this case neither neutralize nor strengthen one another: Examples (none in Shakespeare): Defoe R. 50 it gave us not time hardly to say, O God! | Swift J. 372 and nobody hardly took notice of him | Cowper L. 1. 154 nothing hardly is welcome but childish fiction | GE A. 197 I've never hardly known him to miss church before | id. M. 2. 209 | Darwin L. 2. 39 that no one has hardly a right to examine the question of species who has not minutely described many | ib. 2. 165 | Hardy R. 192 Who was there? Nobody hardly | Hope Q. 119 nobody hardly understands criticism as badly as you do | Shaw D. 194 you cant hardly tell who anyone is | id. 1. 29, 34 | Kipling S. 192 He wasn't changed at all hardly | Wells H. 112 they don't seem hardly able to help it | Bennett T. 354 I don't hardly care to stay | id. HL. 17.

Examples of *scarce(ly)* after a negative:

Swinburne T. 137 me not worthy scarce to touch thy kind strong hand | Ward E. 411 There is not a yard of it, scarcely, that hasn't been made by human hands | Morris N. 129 but no one scarcely could throw himself down.

*Hardly* and *scarcely* are also used after *without* and other indirect negatives: Byron D. J. 5. 66 The black, however, without hardly deigning A glance at that | Thack V. 476 without scarcely hearing a word | Norris P. 52 refusing to acknowledge hardly any fiction that was not classic | Read Toothpick Tales 17 I'll be dinged if I hardly know.

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Cf. also Drachmann Forskr. 1. 425 Edith og Gerhard trykkede hinanden i haanden — uden at de knap vidste deraf.

Some instances of double negation with words like *nor* and *neither*, which are not exactly analogues of those given here, will be found in the chapter on Negative connectives (X).

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(3) Closely connected with resumptive negation is what might perhaps be termed *paratactic negation*: a negative is placed in a clause dependent on a verb of negative import like 'deny, forbid, hinder, doubt'. The clause here is in some way treated as an independent sentence, and the negative is expressed as if there had been no main sentence of that particular kind. It is well known how this develops in some languages to a fixed rule, especially if the negative employed has no longer its full negative force: I need only very briefly refer, for instance, to the Latin use of *ne*, *quin*, *quominus*, and to the Fr. insertion of *ne* (which, by the way, is now disappearing like the other *ne*'s). But even in languages which do not as a rule admit a negative in such clauses, it is by no means rare even in good writers, though generally looked upon as an error by grammarians, see for Engl. e. g. Sh. R. 3. I. 3. 90 Yoy may deny that you were not the meane Of my Lord Hastings late imprisonment | Bacon A. 43. 34 we have forbidden . . . that they doe not shew any naturall worke | Lamb E. 2. 185 What hinders in your own instance that you do not return to those habits | Darwin L. 3. 69 it never occurred to me to doubt that your work . . . would not advance our common object in the highest degree.

Parallel instances from German may be found, for instance, in Andresen, Sprachgebr. u. sprachricht. 209 ff.

Danish examples: El. Christ. Jammersm. 62 forbøden, att ingen skulle lade mig faa naale | ib. 85 forhindre, att hun icke satte løgn sammen om mig | ib. 107 eftersom quinden saa



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høyt haffde forsoeren icke att sige ded | ib. 120 hand nætete ded altiit, att ded icke war ham | ib. 201, 213 forhindre . . . icke | Holb. Ulyss. II. 7 for at hindre at misundelsens sæd ikke skal saaes iblandt os (also Ped. P. I. 2, I. 4, etc.) | H. C. Andersen Impr. 2. 136 mine venner burde forhindre at ingen af mine digte, der kun vare poetiske misfostre, kom for lyset | Sibbern Gab. 1. 130 alt skulde anvendes for at forebygge, at min lille pige ikke skulde blive koparret | Kierkegaard Øjeb. 7 at jeg af al magt skal stræbe . . . at bidrage til at afværge, at dette ikke skeer | Bang Fædra 161 vogtede hun sig for ikke at tale for meget om Carl. (Note here the difference between the usual Dan. idiom "man må vogte sig for at overdrive" and the corresponding Engl. "one must take care *not* to exaggerate": cf. also "jeg advarede ham mod at gøre det" and G. "ich warnte ihn, das zu tun", but E. "I warned him *not* to do it").

In this connexion I must mention a Dan. expression which is extremely frequent in colloquial speech, but which is invariably condemned as illogical and put down as one of the worst mistakes possible: "man kan ikke *nægte andet end at* hun er sød". This, of course is illogical if analyzed with *andet* as the sole object of *nægte*: 'one can deny nothing else except that she is sweet'; but to the actual speech-instinct *andet end at hun . . .* goes together as one indivisible whole constituting the object of *nægte*; this is often marked by a pause before *andet*, and *andet-and at* thus makes one negative conjunction comparable with Lat. *quin* or *quominus*. — In the same way one hears, e. g. Der er ikke to meninger om, andet end (at) han er en dygtig mand | der er ikke noget i vejen for, andet end at han skal nok gøre det | jeg kan ikke komme bort fra, andet end at han har ret. From Norwegian I have noted Garborg Bondest. 33 og det var ikke fritt, annat dei [draumar] tok hugen burt fraa boki med.

The following quotations may serve to illustrate the transi-

tion of *andet* (*end*) to a negative conjunction or adverb: Chr. Pedersen 4. 493 det er ellers *umvælgit andet end* at han ey skall fare vild | Goldschm. Ravn. 65 Det er sgu da ikke *andet end* til at lee ad | Pontopp. Landsbyb. 155 han bestilte ikke det, man kan tænke sig *andet, end* at drikke portvin | Bjørns. Flag. 432 men det var umuligt *annet æn* i hennes omgang at komme til at gå for langt | Grundtv. Folkeæv. 65 Stodderen laa stille som en mus, *andet end* at hun kunde høre ham trække vejret tungt | Jón Þorkelsson, Ark. f. nord. filol. 6. 163 það var ekki að sjá á honum *annað en* hann væri ungur maður || Blicher Bindst. 51 De var ett got *anned* | E. Brandes Lyk. bl. 3 Maaske højesteretssagføreren kender mig? — Bevares, det vilde være mærkeligt *andet* | Giellerup Rom. 98 begge dele har deres betydning, det kan man ikke sige *andet* | id. Minna 311 Det er jeg vis paa — det er umuligt *andet*.

The related use of E. *but* (*but that, but what*) will be treated in ch. XII.

(4) There is a curious use of a seemingly superfluous negative in Dan., which cannot be explained exactly in the same way as any of the phenomena hitherto dealt with, namely *langtfra ikke*, which used to be the regular idiom in phrases like "hun er langtfra ikke så køn som søsteren" from the time of Holberg till the middle of the 19th century, when it was superseded by *langtfra* without *ikke*: "hun er langtfra så køn som søsteren"; Engl. here has the positive form, but inserts the verbal substantive in *-ing*: "she is far from being as pretty as her sister". *Langtfra ikke* would be explicable as an instance of blending (contamination) if it could be proved that *langtfra* was used as in recent times before the rise of *langtfra ikke*, but I have no material to decide this question. (Cf. J. Levin, "Dagbladet" som det danske sprogs ridder, Københ. 1861).

(5) I collect here several partly heterogeneous instances of confusion in negative sentences, which I have found some difficulty in placing, either in this or in any other chapter. Such confusion will occur frequently, especially if two or more negative or half-negative words are combined, but more frequently, of course, in everyday speech than in printed literature. Shakespeare, in accordance with the popular character of Elizabethan plays, destined to be heard much more than to be read, pretty frequently indulges in such carelessness (see Al. Schmidt, *Sh.-lex.* p. 1420), e. g. *Wint* III. 2. 57 wanted lesse impudence [had less i. or wanted i. more] | *Cymb.* I. 4. 23 a begger without less quality [with less q.] | *Cor.* I. 4. 14 nor a man that feares you lesse then he [fears you more]. A doubtful instance is *Lr.* II. 4. 141 you lesse know how to value her desert, Then she to scant her dutie — for, as Koppel remarks, *Verbesserungsvorschläge* 70, everything is correct, if we understand 'you are *still* less capable of valuing her than she is capable of scanting her duty'. But *Lr.* V. 3. 94 Ile proue [folio: make] it on thy heart, Ere I taste bread, thou art in nothing lesse Then I haue heere proclaim'd thee [i. e. a traitor] — evidently is a confusion of two ideas: thou art nothing less than . . . and: thou art in nothing [= in no respect] more than . . .

*Cæs.* II. 1. 114 if not the face of men, The sufferance of our soules, the times abuse; If these be motiues weake, breake off betimes. Here some editors change *if not* into *if that*, but this is not at all necessary: the sentence is meant to be continued: if not these suffice, or: are strong enough, but is then continued in a different way, as is very often the case in everyday speech.

Modern instances of a similar character: *Austen* P. 133 he can have nothing to say to me that anybody need not hear [= that anybody may not hear; that it is necessary that nobody hears] | *NP.* '99 there was none too poor or too remote

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not to feel an interest | Huxley L. 1. 118 a married man cannot live at all in the position which I ought to occupy *under less than* six hundred a year | Matthews Father's Son 243 you know what a weak softy he is. If there was *hardly any* mischief to be had he'd be in the thick of it [if there was any, even the slightest, m.; or, there was hardly any m., but . . .].

German instances of confusion have been collected by F. Polle, *Wie denkt das volk uber die sprache*, 1889, 14, e. g. Lessing: "wie wild er schon war, als er nur hörte, dass der prinz dich jüngst *nicht ohne missfallen* gesehen!" (= 'nicht ohne wohlgefallen') | Man *versäume nicht*, die günstige gelegenheit *unbenutzt* vorübergehen zu lassen. — I remember seeing in a notice in the Tirol: "*Nicht unweit* von hier, in dem walde . . .", the meaning evidently being *nicht weit* = *unweit*.

Siesbye, in *Opuscula ad Madvigium* 241, and Mikkelsen, *Ordføjningsl.* 328, collect some examples like Hor.: Invidus, iracundus, iners, vinosus, amator, Nemo adeo ferus est, ut non mitescere possit | Goethe: Musik, rollen und schuhe, wäsche und italiänische blumen . . ., keines verschmähte die nachbarschaft des andern | G. Sand: Pistolets, sabres recourbés et coutelas, rien ne manquait pour lui donner l'apparence du plus expéditif tueur d'hommes | sangene, indskrifterne, jordbærrene, intet blev glemmt. But Mikkelsen's description is not quite correct, and the real explanation evidently is that the writer begins his sentence with the intention of continuing it in a positive form (the envious, angry . . . all can be mollified, etc.) and then suddenly changes the form of his expression. Nor is it necessary, as Mikkelsen says, to have a whole series of words, as seen in Wells V. 258 People, nobody, can do as they like in this world. — Cf. Dan. NP. '15 Mændene og endnu mindre kvinderne kender begrebet linned [i Japan].

The confusion is somewhat similar to the one found when an enumeration of things that are wanting ends with *no nothing*

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(no paper, no pen, no ink, no nothing), which is meant as a negative of *everything*; the origin of the phrase is, of course, to be explained from a desire to go on with *no* + some other noun, but as the speaker can hit upon no more things to enumerate, he breaks off after *no* and finishes with *nothing*; *no* thus is only seemingly an adjunct to *nothing*: Carlyle F. 4. 223 no milk in the house! no nothing!

NED. *help* 11 c says "Often erron. with negative omitted (*can* instead of *cannot*), e. g. I did not trouble myself more than I could help | your name shall occur again as little as I can help". But it would certainly be unidiomatic to say, as Whately demands, *more than I can not help*; the idiom is caused by the fact that every comparison with *than* really implies a negative idea (*he has more than necessary* implies 'it is not necessary to have more', etc.) and it is on a par with the logic that is shown, for instance, in the French use of *ne* (*plus qu'il ne faut*) and in the dialectal *nor* for 'than'. — But there is some difficulty in explaining this meaning of *help*: note that where in England it is usual to say "I could not help admiring her", Americans will often prefer the negative expression with *but*: "I could not help but admire her".

*Seldom or never* and *seldom if ever* are blended into *seldom or ever*, which is said to be frequent where the influence of the school is not strong; Ellis in Trans. of Philol. Soc. 73 4. 12 *Seldom or ever* could I detect any approach to a labial.

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## CHAPTER VIII

### The Meaning of Negation.

A linguistic negative generally changes a term into what logicians call the contradictory term (A and not-A comprising everything in existence) and is thus very different from a

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negative in the mathematical sense, where  $-4$  means a point as much below 0 as 4 (or  $+4$ ) is above 0. We have, however, seen instances in which a negative changes a term into the "contrary term", as when *he begins-not to sing* (for *he begins not-to-sing*) comes to mean 'he ceases singing' (p. 52).

If we say, according to the general rule, that "not four" means "different from four", this should be taken with a certain qualification, for in practice it generally means, not whatever is above or below 4 in the scale, but only what is below 4, thus less than 4, something between 4 and 0, just as "not everything" means something between everything and nothing (and as "not good" means 'inferior', but does not comprise 'excellent'). Thus in "He does not read three books in a year" | "the hill is not two hundred feet high" | "his income is not £ 200 a year" | "he does not see her once a week".

This explains how 'not one' comes to be the natural expression in many languages for 'none, no', and 'not one thing' for 'nothing', as in OE *nan* = *ne-an*, whence *none* and *no*, OE *nanþing*, whence *nothing*, ON *engi*, whence Dan. *ingen*, G. *k-ein*, etc. Cf. also Tennyson 261 That *not one* life shall be destroy'd . . . That *not a* worm is cloven in vain; see also p. 49. In French similarly: *Pas un bruit n'interrompt le silence*, etc.

When *not* + a numeral is exceptionally to be taken as 'more than', the numeral has to be strongly stressed, and generally to be followed by a more exact indication: "the hill is not two hundred feet high, but 'three hundred'" | "his income is not 200, but at least 300 a year" | Locke S. 321 Not one invention, but fifty — from a corkscrew to a machine-gun | Defoe R. 342 not once, but two or three times | Gissing R. 149 books that well merit to be pored over, not once but many a time | Benson A. 220 he would bend to kiss her, not once, not once only.

But *not once or twice* always means 'several times', as in

Tennyson 220 Not once or twice in our rough island-story  
The path of duty was the way to glory.

In Russian, on the other hand, *ne raz* 'not (a) time', thus really without a numeral, means 'several times, sometimes' and in the same way *ne odin* 'not one' means 'more than one'; corresponding phenomena are found in other languages as well, see a valuable little article by Schuchardt, *An Aug. Leskien zum 4. juli 1894* (privately printed). He rightly connects this with the use in Russian of the stronger negative *ni* with a numeral to signify 'less than': *ni odin* 'not even one'.

What the exact import is of a negative quantitative indication may in some instances depend on what is expected, or what is the direction of thought in each case. While the two sentences "he spends £ 200 a year" and "he lives on £ 200 a year" are practically synonymous, everything is changed if we add *not*: "he doesn't spend £ 200 a year" means 'less than'; "he doesn't live on £ 200 a year" means 'more than'; because in the former case we expect an indication of a maximum, and in the latter of a minimum.

Or, perhaps, the explanation is rather this, that in the former sentence it does not matter whether we negative the nexus or the numeral (he does-not-spend £ 200 | he spends not-£200), but in the latter it changes the whole meaning, for "he does-not-live on 200" states the impossibility of living on so little, and "he lives on not-200 a year" (which is rendered more idiomatic if we add an adverb: on not quite 200 a year) states the possibility of living on less than 200. In the former sentence the numeral thus is not negated at all. Compare also: *he is not content with 200 a year* and *he is content with not 200 a year*. — In the proverb "Rome was not built in a day" (where *a* is the old numeral and equals *one*) the meaning also, of course, is that it took more than one day to build Rome. Thus also in Rolland JChr. 8. 98 on *ne bâtit pas un art musical en un jour*.

Where a numeral is not used as a point in an ascending scale, its negative is really contradictory; "the train doesn't start at seven" says nothing about the actual time of starting, which may be either before or after seven. But "he won't be here at seven" implies "we can't expect him till after seven", because an arrival before 7 o'clock would naturally imply his being here also at that hour.

As *half* is a numeral, *not half* generally means 'less than half': *the bottle is not half full*. In slang, *not half bad* means, however, 'not at all bad, quite good'. In the following quotation, *not half-alive* (with strong stress on *half*) means 'more than half alive', as shown also by the continuation: Bennett C. 1. 285 At any rate she was not half alive; she was alive in every particle of herself. In the same way, in rustic speech, "she didn't half cry" means that she made a tremendous noise (Wright, *Rustic Speech* 117).

*Not quite the average* generally means 'below the average'; sometimes, however, *average* is taken as a depreciating epithet, and then the negative may be appreciatory: Dewey, *School and Soc.* 61 Here is another piece of work which is not quite average; it is better than the average.

*Not above 30* means either 30 or less than 30. But *less than 30* may in English be negated in two ways: *not less than 30* means either 30 or more than thirty, and *no less than 30* means exactly 30, implying surprise or wonder at the high number. "He has not less than ten children" — I am not certain of the exact number, but it is at least ten. "He has no less than ten children" — he has ten, and isn't that a large family? In the same way with *more*. Cf. on this distinction between *not* and *no* with comparatives MEG. II. 16. 83 ff. and Stoffel, *Studies in English* 87 ff.

In Latin both *non magis quam* and *non minus quam* are favourite expressions for equality, though of course used in



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different connexions: *Cæsar non minus operibus pacis florebat quam rebus in bello gestis* | *Pericles non magis op. pacis fl. quam r.* 1. b. g. (Cauer, Grammatica militans 52).

There is really no perfect negative corresponding to *as rich as*, comprising both 'richer' and 'poorer', for *not so rich as* (note the change of the first conjunction) excludes 'richer' and means 'less rich'.

We have already seen (p. 40) that *a little* and *little* differ, the former being a positive and the latter almost a negative term. We may arrange these terms (with *a few* and *few*) into a scale like this:

1. much:    much money    | many (people)    | very careless
2. a little:   a little money | a few (people)   a little careless
3. little:    little money    | few (people)    | little careless

only that *little careless* is not quite idiomatic, as *little* is not often used with depreciatory adjectives; cf. on the other hand *little intelligent*.

Now if we try the negatives of these we discover that negating 1 turns it into 3: *not much (money) = little (money)*; *not many (people) = few (people)*; *not very intelligent = little intelligent*. But a negative 2 becomes nearly synonymous with 1 (or stands between 1 and 2): *not a little (money) = much (money)*; *not a few (people) = many (people)*; *not a little intelligent = very intelligent*.

Examples of *a few* and *a little* negated:

Sh. H. 8. I. 2. 18 I am solicited not by a few, And those of true condition [= by not a few] | Sh. Lr. I. 1. 286 Sister, it is not a little I haue to say, Of what most neerely appertaines to vs both [Q not a little, F not little] | Bunyan P. 147 At which they were not a little sorry (ib. 124) | Allen in First 46 it gained me at once the friendship of not a few whose friendship was

worth having | Ruskin Sel. 1. 410 a phenomenon which puzzles me not a little.

While it seems to be usual in all languages to express *contradictory* terms by means either of derivatives like those mentioned p. 42 or of an adverb corresponding to *not*, languages very often resort to separate roots to express the most necessary *contrary* terms. Hence such pairs as *young* — *old*, *good* — *bad*, *big* — *small*, etc. Now, it is characteristic of such pairs that intermediate stages are found, which may be expressed negatively by *neither young nor old*, etc.; the simple negation of one of the terms (for instance *not young*) comprising both the intermediate and the other extreme. Sometimes a language creates a special expression for the intermediate stage, thus *indifferent* in the comparatively recent sense of 'neither good nor bad, what is between good and bad', *medium-sized* between big and small. There may even be a whole long string of words with shades of meaning running into one another and partially overlapping, as in *hot* (*sweltering*) — *warm* — *tepid* — *lukewarm* — *mild* — *fresh* — *cool* — *chilly* — *cold* — *frosty* — *icy*. If one of these is negated, the result is generally analogous to the negating of a numeral: *not lukewarm*, for instance, in most cases means less than lukewarm, i. e. cold or something between cold and lukewarm.

If we lengthen the series given above (*much* — *a little* — *little*) in both directions, we get on the one hand *all* (*everything*), on the other hand *nothing*. These are contrary terms, even in a higher degree than *good* and *bad* are, as both are absolute. Whatever comes in between them (thus all the three quantities mentioned above) is comprised in the term *something*, and we may now arrange these terms in this way, denoting by A and C the two absolutes, and by B the intermediate relative:

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A	B	C
all (n.) everything	}	something [ nothing
and correspondingly		
all (pl.) everybody	}	some [ none somebody [ nobody
all girls	}	some girls (a girl) [ no girl(s)
all the money	}	some money [ no money.

In exactly the same way we have the adverbs:

always	}	sometimes [ never
everywhere	}	somewhere [ nowhere.

Let us now consider what the result is if we negative these terms. A negative *A* means *B*:

not all, not everything	= something,
not all, not everybody	= some,
not all girls	= some girls,
not all the money	= some (of the) money,
not always	= sometimes,
not everywhere	= somewhere.

This amounts to saying that in negating an *A* it is the *absolute* element of *A* that is negated. Thus always when the negative precedes the absolute word of the *A*-class: Ten-nyson 222 We are not cotton-spinners all, But some love England and her honour yet | they are not all of them fools | I do not look on every politician as a humbug | NP. '17 this change is not all gain | Wells Br. 325 Not all Hugh's letters were concerned with these technicalities | Mason R. 179 it seemed that not all the pallor was due to the lamp | he is not always so sad | non omnis moriar.

When a negated *all* in this sense is the subject, we may have the word-order *not all* before the verb as in the sentences just quoted from Wells and Mason, or in the Dan. and G.

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proverb "Ikke alt hvad der glimrer er guld" | "Nicht alles, was glänzt, ist gold"; or the subject may in some way be transposed so as to allow the negative to go with the verb, as in the more usual form of the Dan. proverb "Det er ikke guld alt som glimrer", in G. "Es ist nicht alles gold, was glänzt"; Tobler quotes MHG. "ez en-ist nicht allez gold daz da glizzit" and Rutebeuf "n'est pas tout or quanqu'il reluit". Cf. also Schiller's "Es sind nicht alle frei, die ihrer ketten spotten", and the proverb "Es sind nicht alle jäger, die das horn gut blasen".

But very often *all* is placed first for the sake of emphasis, and the negative is attracted to the verb in accordance with the general tendency mentioned above (p. 44). This is often looked upon as illogical, but Tobler, in an instructive article on Fr. "Tout ce qui reluit n'est pas or" (Vermischte beitr. z. franz. gramm. 1. 159 ff.) rightly calls attention to the difference between sentences like "nicht mitglieder können eingeführt werden" (non-members may be introduced), where only one member of a positive sentence is negative (what I call special negative) and the Fr. proverb, where the negation is connected with the verb, "dem kern der aussage", and the expression consequently is "ein im höchsten grade angemessener, indem er besagt: von dem subjekte "alles glänzende" darf "gold sein" nicht prädiiziert werden".

English examples of this arrangement are very frequent: Ch. B. 2708 but *every man may nat* have the perfeccioun that ye seken | Sh. Merch. II. 7. 65 *All that glisters is not gold* | Lr. II. 4. 199 *All's not* offence that indiscretion findes, And dotage termes so | AV. 1. Cor. 6. 12 All things are lawfull vnto mee, but *all things are not* expedient | Walton A. 106 *every one cannot* make musick | Richardson G. 72 thank Heaven, *all scholars are not* like this | Johnson R. 152 *every one is not* able to stem the temptation of public life | Goldsmith 20 As *every person may not* be acquainted with this

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pastime | Milt PL. 1. 106 and Shelley 119 *all is not* lost | Byron 436 But *all men are not* born to reign | Lamb. E. 1. 103 *All Valentines are not* foolish | Browning 2. 170 *All women are not* mothers of a boy, Though they live twice the length of my whole life | Ward M. 16 any fool can get up a Blue Book; only, *all the fools don't* | Harraden S. 62 every one is lonely, *but every one does not* know it | Wilde Read. Gaol 3 For each man kills the thing he loves, Yet *each man does not* die | Wells Br. 281 *All our men aren't* angels.

French examples from old and modern times have been collected by Tobler; I add from my own reading Mérimée Deux Hér. 88 *Tout le monde n'a pas* l'esprit de comprendre les chefs d'œuvre | Rolland JChr. 5. 162 *Tout le monde n'est pas* fait pour l'art | ib. 5. 295 *Tout le monde ne peut pas* tirer le gros lot.

In Dan. the same order is not at all rare: *Alt er ikke* tabt, etc. Note the positive continuation, which shows that 'some' (or 'many') is meant, in Kierkegaard Stad. 138 Men *alle ere ikke* saa vise som Socrates, og indlade sig ofte ganske alvorligt med een, der *gjør* et dumt spørgsmål.

In German Tobler mentions the possibility of the same: *alle druckfehler können hier nicht* aufgezählt werden, etc.

With regard to Greek Krüger in his Griech. sprachl. § 67 insists on the distinction *ou pánta orthôs epolēsen* nicht alles — wohl aber manches; *pánta ouk orthôs epolēsen* alles nicht richtig — sondern falsch; *orthôs pánta ouk epolēsen* mit recht hat er alles nicht gethan — sondern unterlassen; but he admits exceptions for the sake of emphasis, especially with contrasts with *mén* and *dé*; he quotes from Xenophon *Pántes mèn ouk élthon, Ariaíos dè kai Artáoxtos.* —

On the other hand, when a word of the A-class (*all*, etc.) is placed in a sentence containing a special negative (or an implied negative), the result is the same as if we had the

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corresponding *C*-word and a positive word; thus the assertion is absolute:

all this is unnecessary = nothing is necessary,  
everybody was unkind = nobody was kind,  
he was always unkind = he was never kind,  
everybody fails = nobody succeeds,  
he forgets everything = he remembers nothing.

The same effect is rare when we have a nexal negative with one of the *A*-words; cf. Rolland JChr. 8. 141 *Tous ces gens-là ne sont pas humains* [i. e. none of them is]. Tobler also has a few examples from Fr., thus La Bruyère: *maxime usée et triviale que tout le monde sait, et que tout le monde ne pratique pas* | id. *Toute jalousie n'est point exempte de quelque sorte d'envie* . . . ; l'envie au contraire est quelquefois séparée de la jalousie. I know no English examples of this.

The difference between the two possible results of the negation of a word like *all* is idiomatically expressed by the contrast between two adverbs, as seen in

he is *not altogether* happy (Sh. Wiv. I. 1. 175 I am not altogether an asse) | *pas tout-à-fait* | *ikke helt* | *nicht ganz* — result B;

he is *not at all* happy (he is *not* happy *at all*) | *pas du tout* | *slet ikke* | *gar nicht* (*ganz und gar nicht*) — result C.

It may perhaps be doubtful whether we have B or C as a result in the common phrase Dan. “Det gjorde jeg *ikke for alt i verden*” = G. “Das täte ich *um alles in der welt nicht*” (E. “I shouldn’t like to do it for anything in the world” more often than “. . . for all the world”). It is, however, more natural to take it to be an equivalent of ‘nothing’, and in the corresponding Fr. idiom *rien* is used, see e. g. Rolland JChr. 5. 83 (*des mondains, qui . . . pour rien au monde n’eussent renoncé à l’honneur*).

There is a third possibility, when *not* is for the sake of emphasis put before *all* in the sense of ‘not even’, though it should properly

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go with the verb as a nexal negative; *all* here means the sum of... (Cf. the distinction made in MEG II. 5. 4 between "all the boys of this form are stronger than their teacher" (if working together) and "all the boys of this form are able to run faster than their teacher", (i. e. each separately). Thus Sh R2 III. 2. 54 *Not all* the water in the rough rude sea Can wash the balme from an anyoynted king Locke S 341 *Not all* the trying of Zora and all the Ladies Bountiful of Christendom could give her her heart's desire. Cf. with nexal negative Sh R3 I. 2. 250 On me, whose *all not equals* Edwards moytie Rolland JChr 7. 193 *toutes les idées ne comptent guère*, quand on aime.

If now we examine what results when a word belonging to the *C*-class is negated, we shall see corresponding effects, only that immediate combinations are not frequent except in Latin, where *non-nemo*, *non-nulli* means 'some', *non-nihil* 'something', *non-nunquam* 'sometimes'. Here thus the result clearly belongs to class B.

The same is the case in the frequent idiom *not for nothing* = 'not in vain' or even 'to good purpose' as in Sh. Merch. II. 5. 25 it was not for nothing that my nose fell a bleeding on blacke monday last | Kipl. J. 2. 66 Not for nothing have I led the pack | Hope Ch. 190 she would not have done so for nothing | Raleigh Sh. 42 he was not the eldest son of his father for nothing. — In the same way in other languages: Dan. han er *ikke for intet* (*ikke for ingenting*) sin faers søn | Fr. Rolland JChr. 4. 314 Ce *n'était pas pour rien* qu'elle avait ces yeux hardis.

It is more usual to place the two negatives in two sentences as in "one cannot say that nothing is finer" (= something is finer) or at any rate in an infinitival combination as in Locke S. 285 "It's not good for a man to have no gods" (= it is good to have some gods). Here too the result belongs to class B.

Inversely if we begin with the word belonging to class C and place the negative adverb after it. Thus again in Latin *nemo non videt* 'everybody sees' | *nihil non videt* 'he sees everything' | *Quum id ipsum dicere nunquam non sit ineptum* (Cic.) 'as it is always foolish'; the result thus belongs to class A.

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The same result is obtained when one of these words is followed by a word with a negative prefix or with implied negative meaning:

nothing is unnecessary	=	everything is necessary,
nobody was unkind	=	everybody was kind,
he was never unkind	=	he was always kind,
nobody fails	=	everybody succeeds,
he forgets nothing	=	he remembers everything.

When the negative is a separate word, the result is the same; but in English as in Danish such sentences are generally avoided because they are not always clear or readily understood; it is rare to find combinations like Thack. N. 55 not a clerk in that house did not tremble before her (= all the clerks trembled) | Locke S. 228 no other man but you would not have despised the woman (= every other man would have despised). There is, however, no difficulty if the two negatives are placed in separate sentences, as in "There was no one present that did not weep" (= everybody wept); here *that not* is often replaced by *but*, *but that*, *but what*, see ch. XII. In Dan. "der var ingen tilstede, som ikke græd" or, with a curious negative force of *jo*: "... som jo græd". Similar constructions are frequent in other languages as well; cf. Dr. Johnson's epitaph on Goldsmith: *Nihil tetigit quod non ornavit*.

'Everything' is also the result in such combinations as Rolland JChr. 5. 133 L'art est toujours pur; *il n'y a rien que* de chaste en lui.

The ordinary treatment of both A- and C-words when negated may be brought under one general rule: when the absolute notion (A or C) is mentioned first, the absolute element prevails, and the result is the contrary notion (A . . . not = C; C . . . not = A). If on the other hand, *not* comes first, it nega-



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tives the absolute element, and the result is the intermediate relative (not  $A = B$ ; not  $C = B$ ).

It seems to me that the tripartition here established, —

- A. all
- B. some
- C. none,

is logically preferable to the tripartition in Kant's famous table of categories, —

- A. allheit
- B. vielheit
- C. einheit,

as *many* (vielheit) and *one* (einheit) are both of them comprised under "some"; Kant does not take "none" here, but unintelligibly places negation under the heading "quality", though it is clearly a quantitative category. (See on the confusion caused by these Kantian categories in some philologists' treatment of negation, p. 69 ff.).

The following remarks may also be of some interest to the student of logic. We may establish another tripartition between

- A. necessity
- B. possibility
- C. impossibility,

and if closely inspected, these three categories are found to be nothing else but special instances of our three categories above, for necessity really means that *all* possibilities are comprised. Note now: *not necessary* = possible; *not impossible* = possible; *it is impossible not to see* = necessary.

The verbal expression for these three categories is:

- A. must (or, need)
- B. can (or, may)
- C. cannot,

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and we see their interrelation in instances like these:

he *must* run = he *cannot* but run (cannot help running),  
no one *can* deny = every one *must* admit,  
nobody *need* be present = everybody *may* be absent,  
he *cannot* succeed = he *must* fail,  
he *cannot* forget = he *must* remember.

In the same way we have the Lat. expression for necessity *non potest non amare*, and the corresponding Fr. as in Rolland JChr. 5. 54 car il *ne pouvait pas ne pas* voir qu'ils se moquaient de lui | Meillet Caract. des langues germaniques 50 une variation qui *ne peut pas n'être pas* ancienne. Even with *ne plus*, JChr. 9. 12 il l'entendait partout, il *ne pouvait plus ne plus* l'entendre. With indirect negation we have the same, ib. 9. 49 Et le moyen de ne pas faire la comparaison! [= you must] — different from "Pas moyen de faire la comparaison" [= impossible].

If to the three categories just mentioned we add an element of will with regard to another being, the result is:

- A. command
- B. permission
- C. prohibition.

But these three categories are not neatly separated in actual language, at any rate not in the forms of the verb, for the imperative is usually the only form available for A and B. Thus *take that!* may have one of two distinct meanings, (A) a command: 'you must take that', (B) a permission: 'you may take that', with some intermediate shades of meaning (request, entreaty, prayer). Now a prohibition (C) means at the same time (1) a positive command to not (take that), and (2) the negative of a permission: 'you are not allowed to (take that)'; hence the possibility of using a negative imperative as a prohibitive: *Don't take that!* | *Don't you stir!* But hence also the disinclination in many languages to use

a negative imperative, because that may be taken in a different and milder sense, as a polite request, or advice, not to, etc. And on the other hand formulas expressive at first of such mild requests may acquire the stronger signification of a prohibition. In Latin the negative imperative is only found poetically (*Tu ne cede malis*, Virgil), otherwise we have a paraphrase with *noli* (*Noli me tangere*) or a subjunctive (*ne nos inducas in tentationem*); in Spanish the latter has become the rule (*no vengas* 'don't come').

In Danish, where *Tag det ikke!* is generally employed = 'I ask you, or advise you, not to take it', a prohibition is expressed by *La vær å ta det* (lad være at tage det), which has also the advantage of presenting the negative element first, or colloquially often by *Ikke ta(ge) det!* (*not* + *infin.*), which like the corresponding German formula (*Nicht hinauslehnen*) has developed through children's echo of the fuller sentence: *Du må ikke tage det!* (*Du darfst nicht hinauslehnen!*).

In other languages separate verb-forms ('jussive') have developed for prohibitions, or else negative adverbs distinct from the usual ones (cf. Greek *mē*), see Misteli, *Charakteristik der typen des sprachbaues* p. 22.

This will serve to explain some peculiarities in the use of E. *must* and *may*. As we have seen, a prohibition means (1) a positive command to not . . .; thus: *you must* (positive) *not-take that* (negative); and (2) the negative of a permission: *you may-not* (negative) *take* (positive) *that*. But in (1) we have the usual tendency to attract the negation to the auxiliary (see p. 44), and thus we get: *you mustn't take that*, which never has the sense of 'it is not necessary for you to take that' (negative *must*), but has become the ordinary prohibitive auxiliary. On the other hand, in (2) we have the competition with the usual combination of (positive) *may* + negative infinitive, as in "He may not be rich, but he is

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a gentleman"; this makes people shrink from *may-not* in a prohibition, the more so as *may* is felt to be weaker and more polite than the more brutal *must*. The result is that to the positive "we may walk on the grass" corresponds a negative "we mustn't walk on the grass".

See on such semantic changes as a result of negatives Wellander in *Språkvetenskapl. sällskapets förhandlingar* 1913—15 p. 38.

The old *may not* in prohibitions, which was extremely common in Sh., is now comparatively rare, except in questions implying a positive answer (*mayn't I* = 'I suppose I may') and in close connexion with a positive *may*, thus especially in answers. In our last quotation it is probably put in for the sake of variation: Sh. Lr. IV. 5. 16 'I must needs after him' . . . 'Stay with vs' . . . 'I may not' | Sh. Err. III. 2. 92 such a one, as a man may not speake of, without he say sir reverence | Marlowe E. 939 You may not in, my lord. May we not? | Congreve 249 Mayn't my cousin stay with me? | Di. X. 17 how it is that I appear before you I may not tell | Hope D. 59 Mayn't I see the dodges? | ib. 90 May not I accompany you? | Hardy R. 73 Perhaps I may kiss your hand? — No, you may not | Benson J. 164 May I tell you? 'No, you may not' | Wells U. 303 they may study maps beforehand . . . but they may not carry such helps. They must not go by beaten ways | Merriman V. 175 the Polish Jew must not leave the country, may not even quit his native town, unless it suits a paternal Government that he should go elsewhere.

Positive *may* and negative *must not* are frequently found together: Ruskin T. 102 Your labour only may be sold; your soul must not | Stevenson A. 26 Prose may be rhythmical, and it may be as much so as you will; but it must not be metrical. It may be anything, but it must not be verse | Hope R. 86 I mustn't kiss your face, but your hands I may

kiss | Shaw 2. 251 You may call me Dolly if you like; but you musnt call me child.

*May* is thus used even in tag questions after *must not*: Austen S. 62 I must not tell, may I, Elinor? | Di. D. 16 You mustn't marry more than one person at a time, may you?' 'Certainly not.' 'But if you marry a person, and the person dies, why then you may marry another person, mayn't you?' 'You MAY, if you choose'.

On the other hand, *must* begins to be used in tag questions, though it is not possible to ask *Must I?* instead of *May I?* Thus: GE M. 2. 50 I must not go any further, must I? | Caine P. 136 I suppose I must not romp too much now, must I?

I may add here a few examples of *may* denoting possibility with a negative infinitive (*you may not know* = 'it is possible that you do not know'); in the first two quotations *not* is attracted to the verb: Hughes T. 2. 222 you mayn't know it, but... | Locke W. 269 What may be permissible to a scrubby little artist in Paris mayn't be permitted to one who ought to know better | Shaw 1.16 newcomers whom they may not think quite good enough for them | Hope D. 91 I may not be an earl, but I have a perfect right to be useful.

With *may* we see another semantic change brought about by a negative: to the positive *may, might* corresponds a negative *cannot, could not* (not *may not, might not*): NP. 17 this *cannot* do harm and *may* do good | Cowper L. 2.8 I *might* prudently, perhaps, but I *could not* honestly, admit that charge [of careless writing] | Kingsley H. 357 his dialectic, though it *might* silence her, *could not* convince her | Birmingham W. 94 He *might* be a Turk. — No, he *couldn't*.

## CHAPTER IX

### Weakened Negatives.

Negative words or formulas may in some combinations be used in such a way that the negative force is almost vanishing. There is scarcely any difference between questions like "Will you have a glass of beer?" and "Won't you have a glass of beer?", because the real question is "Will you, or will you not, have. . . ."; therefore in offering one a glass both formulas may be employed indifferently, though a marked tone of surprise can make the two sentences into distinct contrasts: "Will you have a glass of beer?" then coming to mean 'I am surprised at your wanting it', and "Won't you have a glass of beer?" the reverse. (In this case *really* is often added.)

In the same way in Dan. "Vil De ha et glas øl?" and "Vil De ikke ha et glas øl?" A Dutch lady once told me how surprised she was at first in Denmark at having questions like "Vil De ikke række mig saltet?" asked her at table in a boarding-house; she took the *ikke* literally and did not pass the salt. *Ikke* is also used in indirect (reported) questions, as in Faber Stegek. 28 saa har madammen bedt Giovanni, om han ikke vil passe lidt paa barnet.

A polite request is often expressed by saying "Would (or, Do) you mind taking. . . .", and, as *mind* means 'object to', the logical answer is *no* = 'I don't mind'; but very frequently *yes* or some other positive reply (*By all means!* etc.) is used, which corresponds to the implied positive request: Pinero S. 21 D.: When you two fellows go home, do you mind leaving me behind here? M.: Not at all. J.: By all means. | Ward E. 128 Do you mind my asking you a question? — By all means! What can I do?

*Not at all* is frequent as an idiomatic reply to phrases of politeness, which do not always contain words to which *not at all* can be logically attached: Di Do 32 "I'm sorry to give

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you so much trouble". "Not at all". [does not negative the other's feeling sorry, but the giving trouble; also ib 363] | Di D. 355 "Thank you very much for that!" "Not at all, I said loftily, there is no reason why you should thank me" | Shaw J. 205 I beg your pardon. — Not at all | id 1.48 Excuse me. [Trench is heard replying 'Not at all', Cokane 'Dont mention it, my dear sir.']

In exclamations a *not* is often used though no negative notion is really implied; this has developed from the use of a negative *question* = a positive statement: "How often have we not seen him?" = 'we have often seen him' | "What have we not suffered?" = 'we have suffered everything' (or, very much). As an exclamation of this form is a weakened question (as shown also by the tone), we see that in these sentences the import of the negation is also weakened, so that it really matters very little whether a *not* is added or not, as illustrated clearly by the varied sentences in our first quotation: Stanley Dark Cont. 2.482 What a long, long and true friendship was here sundered! Through what strange vicissitudes of life had they not followed me! What wild and varied scenes had we not seen together! What a noble fidelity these untutored souls had exhibited! | Spect 166 What good to his country might not a trader have done with such useful qualifications? | Doyle NP. 1895 Ah, my friend, what did I not fear at that moment! | Galsworthy M. 34 How often have I not watched him. . . . How often have I not seen them coming back, tired as cats.

Somewhat differently in Harraden S. 71 I don't know how long I should not have gone on grumbling | Bennett B. 121 no one could say how soon he might not come to himself | Gosse Mod. E. Lit. 23 What Chaucer might not have produced had he lived ten years longer no one can endure to conjecture.

In Dan. exclamations *ikke* is extremely frequent: "Hvor

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var han dog ikke rar!" | Pal-Müller 6.380 Hvor har ei da du liidt! | K. Larsen Sidste krig 124 Hvilken større glæde kunde jeg ikke faa her paa jorden.

In German *nicht* was frequent in exclamations in the 18th c.: "wie ungesucht war nicht der gang seines glücks"; now the positive form is preferred (Paul, Wörterb. 383).

In concessive clauses and phrases, *never* (*so*) is often used concurrently with *ever*, which seems to be gaining ground. (Cf. Abbott § 52, Storm E. Ph. 702, Alford Q. 62, Bøgholm B. 88).

*Never so* after *though* and *if*: Ch. B. 355 For though his wyf be cristned never so whyte, She shal have nede to wasshe away the rede | More U. 299 he shall sterue for hunger, though the commen wealthe floryshe neuer so muche (ib. 54,55,241). AV. Job. 9.30 If I make my handes neuer so cleane, yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch | Milton A. 32 any deceased author, though never so famous in his life time | Bunyan G. 11 had I but seen a priest (though never so sordid and debauched in his life) || More U. 38 yf it were neuer so muche | Sh. Mids. III. 2. 334 if thou dost intend Neuer so little shew of loue to her, Thou shalt abide it.

It is very frequent in clauses with inverted word-order and no conjunction: Ch. Duch 873 were she never so glad, Hir loking was not foly sprad (ib. 913, 1107) | Roister 48 a wower be he neuer so poore Must play and sing before his bestbeloues doore | More U. 286 they thinke it not lawfull to touch him, be he neuer so vityous | Sh. John III. 3.31 and creepe time nere so slow, Yet it shall come, for me to doe thee good | Milton S. 212 wisest men Have err'd . . . And shall again, pretend they ne're so wise | Fielding T. 4.301 forgive her all her sins, be they never so many | Ruskin F. 95 go they never so glibly | Merriman S. 179 there was a sullen silence which Paul could not charm away, charm he never so wisely || Cf.



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also Roister 81 lette neuer so little a gappe be open, And.... the worst shall be spoken | Goldsmith 658 curb her never so little, she kicks up, and you're flung in a ditch.

Other examples of *never so*: Sh. R. 2 V. 1.64 thou wilt know againe, Being ne're so little vrg'd another way | Carlyle H. 39 there will not again be any man, never so great, whom his fellowmen will take for a god | id R. 2.258 the pain ceased, except when the wounded limb was meddled with never so little | id F. 2.209 I have heard a hundred anecdotes about William Hazlitt; yet cannot by never so much cross-questioning even form to myself the smallest notion of how it really stood with him | Emerson 308 Private men keep their promises, never so trivial.

Some examples of *ever so* may serve to show that the signification is exactly the same as of the negative phrase: Swift 3.271 every man desired to put off death, let it approach ever so late | id J. 492 There is something of farce in all these mournings, let them be ever so serious | ib. 545 Pray write me a good-humoured letter immediately, let it be ever so short | Burns 3. 272 The honest man, tho' e'er sae poor, Is king o' men for a' that | Kinglake E. [p ?] how easily my reason, if ever so slightly provoked, would drag me back to life | Ruskin C. 68 a chance of being useful, in ever so humble a way | Gissing R. 8 no one will be vexed, linger I ever so late.

In Dan. concessive clauses with *om* we may similarly use either *aldrig* or *nok*: "jeg gør det ikke, om han så ber mig aldrig så meget om det" or "om han så ber mig nok så meget om det". The negative purport of *aldrig* is here so little felt that one may even sometimes find *ikke* after it, Am. Skram Lucie 193 Det er så, om hun så aldrig så meget ikke ved om det = 'however ignorant she may be of it'.

In Russian *ni* after a relative (interrogative) pronoun has the same generalizing effect as Eng. *-ever*: *kto by ni sprocil*

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'whoever asks', *kak ni dumal* 'however much he thought' (H. Pedersen, *Læsebog* 132).

In the Scandinavian languages there is a curious way of using *ikke for aldrig det* in the signification 'not for the whole world': Kierkeg. *Stad.* 234 *Ak! jeg tør ikke spørge et menneske om noget, ikke for aldrig det* | Goldschm. *Hjæml.* 1.48 *Man vilde ikke have gjort det samme, ikke for aldrig det* | Blicher *Bindst.* 48 *a vel ikke træk kjowlen aa ham faar aalle de* | Lie *Naar sol g. n.* 5 *hun vilde ikke truffet toldinspektøren i nat-troje for aldrig det* | Strindb. *Utop.* 52 *Han vilde icke sälja den för aldrig det.* — Rarely without *ikke*: Larsen *Spring.* punkt 138 *han vilde have givet aldrig det for at kunne have bekæmpet sin uro.*

Among weakened negatives should also be mentioned *nay* (ON *nei*): when one has used a weak expression and finds that a stronger might be properly applied, the addition is partly a contradiction, partly a confirmation, as going further in the same direction. Hence, both *nay* and *yea* may be used in the same sense (note that both were in ME. and early MnE. less strong than *no* and *yes*, respectively). Thus Sh. *Gent* II. 4.179 *we are betroathd: nay more, our mariage howre Determin'd on* | *Mids* III. 2.313 *threatned me To strike me, spurne me, nay to kill me too* | *Buny P.* 189 *I should be as bad, nay worse, then I was before* | *Seeley E.* 89 *the Mediterranean Sea. . . . the chief, nay, almost the one sea of history.*

Cf. *yea*: Sh. *Merch* IV. 1.210 *here I tender it for him in the Court, Yea, twice the summe, if that will not suffice.*

[*Nay* is preserved with the old negative meaning in connexion with *say*, probably for the sake of the rime, as in *Ridge S.* 54 *no one had the right to say him nay* | *Parker R.* 77 *with no one to say him nay*].

In Dan. both *ja* and *nej* may be used in correcting

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or pointing a statement: "han er millionær, nej mangemillionær" or "... , ja mangemillionær".

A weakened negative is also found in the colloquial exaggeration *no time* (or humorously *less than no time*) = 'a very short time': Wells T. 17 Gip got it in no time | Hope R. 203 The news will filter through the town in no time | Sterne 83 and all this in five minutes less than no time at all.

A different case is found with *no end*, which is used colloquially for 'an infinite quantity', i. e. 'very much' or 'very many'; in recent times this is even found where no quantity is thought of: *no end of a fine fellow* = 'a very fine fellow', *no end of a man* = 'a real man' or 'a great man': Di X. 101 the Alderman had sealed it with a very large coat of arms and no end of wax | Thack S. 128 everybody must make no end of melancholy reflections | Tenn L. 2.285 I have sometimes no end of trouble to get rid of the alliteration | Mac Carthy 2.402 Parliament had passed no end of laws against it | Kipling S. 119 We'll take an interest in the house. We'll take no end of interest in the house | Gissing G. 96 I'm doing a lot of work. No end of work — more than I've ever done | Hankin 2.16 Mrs. H. has had no end of a good time (also ib. 2.167, 3.107) | Swinburne L. 188 she followed, in no end of a maze one would think || Ward M. 17 they'll make me out no end of a fine fellow | Pinero M. 38 I feel no end of a man | id. B. 12 This beastly scrape of Theophila's has been no end of a shocker for me | Kipling S. 171 we're no end of moral reformers | ib 272 About noon there was no end of a snowstorm | ib. 284 I sent him no end of an official stinger | Swinburne L. 43 you ought to make no end of a good hitter in time. . . . a rod with no end of buds on.

## CHAPTER X

### Negative Connectives.

It is, of course, possible to put two negative sentences together without any connective ("he is not rich; his sister is not pretty") or loosely joined by means of *and* ("he is not rich, and his sister is not pretty"); but when the two ideas have at least one element in common, it is usual to join them more closely by means of some negative connective: he is neither rich nor pretty | neither he nor his sister is rich | he neither eats nor drinks. Negative connexions may be of various orders, which are here arranged according to a purely logical scheme: it would be impossible to arrange them historically, and nothing hinders the various types from coexisting in the same language. If we represent the two ideas to be connected as A and B, and understand by c a positive, and by nc a negative connective (while n is the ordinary negative without any connective force), we get the following seven types:

- (1) nc A      nc B;
- (2) nc<sup>1</sup> A    nc<sup>2</sup> B (c<sup>1</sup> and c<sup>2</sup> being different forms);
- (3) nc A      c B;
- (4) A          nc B;
- (5) n A        nc B;
- (6) n A        nc<sup>1</sup> B nc<sup>2</sup>;
- (7) n A        n B nc;

Not unfrequently an ordinary negative is found besides the negative connective. — What is here said about two ideas also applies to three or more, though we shall find in some cases simplifications like nc A, B, C, nc D instead of nc A nc B nc C nc D.

In the first three types the speaker from the very first makes the hearer expect a B after the A; in (4), (5), and (6)

the connexion is indicated after A, but before B; and finally in (7) it is not till B has been spoken that the speaker thinks of showing that B is connected with A.

The connectives are often termed disjunctive, like (*either... or*), but are really different and juxtapose rather than indicate an alternative; this is shown in the formation of Lat. *neque...neque*, which are negative forms of *que...que* 'both... and', and it very often influences the number of the verb (neither he nor I *were*), see MEG. II. 6.62. *Neither... nor* thus is essentially different from *either not... or not*, which gives the choice between two negative alternatives, as in Spencer A. 1.380 [Carlyle] *either could not or would not think coherently*.

(1) *ne* A *ne* B.

The best-known examples of this type — the same connective before A and B — are Latin *neque... neque* with Fr. Sp. *ni...ni*, It. *né...né*, Rum. *nici...nici*, and Gr. *oúte...oúte*, *mête...mête*. In the old Germanic languages we had correspondingly Got. *nih...nih*, and (with a different word) OHG. (Tatian) *noh...noh*; but in *ne...ne* as found in ON, OS. and OE the written form at any rate does not show us whether we have this type (*ne* corresponding to Got. *nih*) or the unconnected use of two simple negatives, corresponding to Got. *ni...ni*; see on the latter Neckel KZ. 45,11 ff. There can be little doubt that the close similarity of the two words, one corresponding to *ni* (Lat. *ne*) and the other to *nih* (*neque*), contributed to the disappearance of this type in these languages.

A late Eng. example is (NED. 1581): *they ne could ne would help the afflicted*.

There is another and fuller form of this type in Eng., namely *nother...nother* (from *ne* + *ōhwæðer*), which was in use from the 13th c. to the beginning of the ModE. period,

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e. g. More U. 211 **whether they belyue well or no, nother the tyme dothe suffer us to discusse, nother it ys nowe necessarye.** In the shortened form *nor...nor* it was formerly extremely frequent, as in Sh. Meas. III. 1.32 **Thou hast nor youth nor age.** This is found as an archaism even in the 19th c., e. g. Shelley PU. 1. 740 **Nor seeks nor finds he mortal blisses.**

(2) the type  $nc^1 A \text{ } nc^2 B$ ,  
that is, with two different connectives, both of them negative, has prevailed over (1) in later stages of the Germanic languages. Thus we have ON *hvárki (hvárki)...né*; *hvárki* corresponds to Goth. *ni-hwafar-hun* with dropping of the original negative *ne*, the negative sense being attached to *-gi (ki)*. In G. we have *weder...noch*, in which similarly initial *ne* has been dropped; *weder* has quite lost the original pronominal value ('which of two') which *whether* kept much longer in E.

In Engl., on the other hand, the *n*-element has never been lost, but is found both in the old formula *nother (nawæðer, nohwæðer, nawðer, nowðer)...ne* and in the later (from the ME. period) *neither (naðer, nayther)...ne* as well as in the corresponding forms with *nor* instead of *ne*.

In the second member, the old *ne* as in Caxton R. 88 "I shal neyther hate hym ne haue enuye at him", was used archaically by Spencer and sometimes by his imitators (Shenstone, School-Mistress; Byron, Childe Harold, I and II, etc.)

Apart from this, the normal formula in the ModE. time is *neither...nor*: *neither he nor his sister has come | he has neither wit nor money | Swift 3.336 I could neither run with speed, nor climb trees | he neither loves nor hates her.*

Where there are more than two alternatives, it is not at all rare to omit the connective with the middle ones or one of them: Sh. Meas. III. 1.37 **thou hast neither heate, affection, limbe, nor beautie | id. Cæs. III. 2.226 I haue neyther writ nor**

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words, nor worth, Action nor Vtterance, nor the power of speech.

The conjunction may even be omitted poetically before all except the first alternative: Sh. Lr. III. 2.15 Nor raine, winde, thunder, fire are my daughters | Wiv. IV. 2.62 neyther presse, coffer, chest, trunke, well, vault | Byron DJ. 10.53 as Nor brother, father, sister, daughter love | ib 10.57 connected In neither clime, time, blood, with her defender. This type, which is found only with more than two alternatives, has been placed here for convenience, but might have been given as an independent type: nc A B C D....

(3). Next we come to the type: nc A c B.

This is different from the preceding one in that the second connective is a positive one, the same as is used in alternatives like *either....or*, *aut....aut*, *ou....ou*, *entweder....oder*. Here the negative force of nc is strong enough to work through A so as to infect B. This is the type in regular use in modern Scandinavian, as in Dan. *hverken....eller*, Swed. *varken....eller*. Examples: han er hverken rig eller smuk | hverken han eller hans søster er rig | han hverken spiser eller drikker, etc.

In English *neither....or* is by no means uncommon, though now it has been generally discarded from literary writings through the influence of schoolmasters: Sh. Meas. IV. 2.108 That you swerue not from the smallest article of it, Neither in time, matter, or other circumstance (acc. to A. Schmidt only 3 or 4 times in Sh.) | Swift 3.199 they neither can speak, or attend to the discourses of others | id. 3.336 I had neither the strength or agility of a common Yahoo | id. P. 6 replies which are neither witty, humorous, polite, or authentic | Defoe. R. 26 I neither saw, or desir'd to see any people | ib. 17, 101, 106 etc. | ib. 58 having neither sail, oar, or rudder | ib. 81 | Scott Iv. 167 a cloak, neither fit to defend the wearer from cold or from rain | id. A. 2.36 | Carlyle R.

1. 73 thrifty men, who neither fell into laggard relaxation of diligence, or were stung by any madness of ambition | Tenn. 309 he neither wore on helm or shield The golden symbol of his kinglihood | Trollope D. 2. 140 I am suffering neither from one or from the other.

Defoe, who very often has *neither . . . or*, has the following sentences, which are interesting as showing the effect of distance: where *neither* is near, *or* suffices, where it is some distance back, the negative force has to be renewed: R. 138 I neither knew how to grind or to make meal of my corn, or indeed how to clean it and part it; nor if made into meal, how to make bread of it | ib. 291 having neither weapons or cloaths, nor any food.

In the following sentence *brother or sister* forms so to speak one idea (Ido epicene *frato*), hence *nor* is not used between them: Austen S. 253 neither she nor your brother or sister suspected a word of the matter.

"He knew neither how to walk or speak" (NP. '05) also shows that *or* is preferred when two words are closely linked together; if we substitute *nor*, we should be obliged to continue: *nor how to speak*. A closely similar sentence is found in Bunyan P. 107 they neither know how to do for, or speak to him. — Ib. 204 thou neither seest thy original, or actual infirmities; here if we substitute *nor*, it will be necessary to repeat *thy* before *actual*: but if we change the word-order, it will be possible to say "thou seest neither thy original nor actual infirmities". (In other places Bunyan uses *neither . . . nor*, thus ib. 106, 108).

The use of *or* after *neither* cannot be separated from the use of *or* after another negative, as in the following instances; it will be seen that *or* is more natural in those marked (a) because the negative word can easily cover everything following, than in (b) or (c): (a) Marlowe F. 718 Faustus vowes neuer to looke to heauen, Neuer to name God, or to pray to him | ib. 729,



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ed. 1616, but ed. 1604 nor | Di. Do. 156 he lived alone, and never saw her, or inquired after her | Austen P. 310 she knew not what to think, or how to account for it | Tenn. L. 3. 105 I haven't seen Palgrave yet or Woolner.... I have not written to Browning yet or seen him | Wells Br. 179 Nobody was singing or shouting.

(b) Defoe R. 359 a pleasant country, and no snow, no wolves, or any thing like them | Wells T. 70 there were no looking-glasses or any bedroom signs about it | Parker R. 240 there were no clinging hands, or stolen looks, or any vow or promise.

(c) Di. D. 114 and not a hair of her head, or a fold of her dress, was stirred | ib. 125 not a word was said, or a step taken | Caine C. 95 because your religion is not my religion or your God my God.

Note also the change in "No one supposes that the work is accomplished now or could be accomplished in one day" and ".....is accomplished now, nor could it be accomplished in one day". — The continuation with *hardly* is interesting in Lamb. E. 1. 155 because he never trifled or talked gallantry with them, or paid them, indeed, hardly common attentions.

(4) A *ne* B,  
that is, a negative conjunction "looking before and after" and rendering both A and B negative, is comparatively frequent in ON and OE with *ne*; from Wimmer's *Læsebog* I quote: *kyks né dauðs nautkak karls sonar* | *hønd of þvær né hqfuð kembir*: from OE *Beow.* 858 *suð ne norð* | 1100 *wordum ne worcum*. (The passages mentioned in Grein's *Sprachschatz* 2d ed. p. 493, are not parallel: in *Beow.* 1604 "*wiston ond ne wendon*" must be understood 'they wished, but did not think'; in *Andr.* 303 and *Gu.* 671 the great number of preceding *ne*'s account for the omission in one place, cf. above 105 f.).

See Delbrück, p. 55 f., where also instances of OHG. *noh* may be found: *laba noh gizami* 'weder labung noch rettung' | *kind noh quena*, etc. Paul, Wörterb. has a few modern instances, Wieland: in wasser noch in luft | Goethe: da ich mich wegen eines termins der herausgabe noch sonst auf irgend eine weise binden kann. — The examples show that Delbrück's restriction to "einem zweigliedrigen nominalen ausdruck" is too narrow; nor can I admit the correctness of his explanation that "*ni* erspart wurde, weil eine doppelte negation in dem kurzen satzstück als störend empfunden wurde". Neckel says, more convincingly: "In solchen ausdrücken steht *ni(h)* ἀπό κοινοῦ. Die unmittelbare nachbarschaft mit beiden gliedern erlaubt, es auf beide zu beziehen". And then prosiopesis comes into play, too.

In later Engl., though not often in quite recent times, we find *nor* used in the same way without a preceding negative: Caxton R. 89 my fader nor I dyde hym neuer good | Townl. 33 for Jak nor for gill will I turne my face | Marlowe E. 1633 The king of England, nor the court of Fraunce, shall haue me from my gracious mothers side | Eastw. 439 so closely conuaide that his new ladie nor any of her friendes know it | Sh. Mch. II. 3. 69 Tongue nor heart cannot conceiue, nor naine thee | Bunyan P. 127 they threatned that the cage nor irons should serve their turn | Austen S. 227 they were both strongly prepossessed that she nor her daughters were such kind of women | Carlyle R. 2. 257 She struggled against this for an instant or two (maid nor nobody assisting) | Hawthorne T. 126 My father, nor his father before him, ever saw it otherwise.

It will be seen that all these are examples of principal words (substantives or pronouns); it is very rare with verbs, as in the following quotation, where *no longer* shows that the negative notion is to be applied to both auxiliaries: Swift J. 117 but I can nor will stay no longer now | cf. also Shelley

88 he moved nor spoke, Nor changed his hue, nor raised his locks.

On a different use of the same form (A *nc* B), where A is to be understood in a positive sense, see below p. 114.

(5) n A *nc* B.

In this type the negativity of A is indicated, though not by means of a connective. The negative connective (*nc*) before B is the counterpart of *also* or *too*; and some languages, such as G., have no special connective for this purpose, but use the same adverb as in positive sentences (*auch nicht*); in Fr. the negative comparative *non plus* is used either with or without the negative connective *ni*. Dan. has a special adverb used with some negative word, *heller ikke*, *heller ingen*, etc.; *heller* (ON *heldr*) is an old comparative as in the Fr. expression and signifies 'rather, sooner'. In Engl. the same negative connectives are used as in the previous types, but in rather a different way; but *no more* may also be used.

Examples of type 5: Sh. As. V. 2. 61 I speake not this, that you should beare a good opinion of my knowledge.... *neither* do I labor for a greater esteeme | Merch I. 1. 43 My ventures are not in one bottome trusted.... *nor* is my whole estate Vpon the fortune of this present yeere | Bunyan P. 17 as yet he had not got rid thereof, *nor* could he by any means get it off without help | Ruskin P. 1. 120 never attaching herself much to us, *neither* us to her | id. F. 42 the royal Dane does not haunt his own murderer, — *neither* does Arthur, King John; *neither* Norfolk, King Richard II.; *nor* Tybalt, Romeo | Bradley S. 29 Nothing makes us think.... *Nor*, I believe, are the facts ever so presented.... *Neither*, lastly, do we receive the impression.... | Locke S. 186 She said nothing, *neither* did he.

But *neither* is used in the same way: Brontë J. 118 She had no great talents....; but *neither* had she any deficiency

or vice | MacCarthy 2. 52 He did not for a moment underestimate the danger; but neither did he exaggerate its importance | Gissing B. 63 they were not studious youths, but neither did they belong to the class that G. despised. — *And nor* in the same sense is rarer: Cambridge Trifles 194 Thackeray, for instance, didn't take a degree, *and nor* did — oh, lots of others.

Very often the sentence introduced by *neither* or *nor* is added by a different speaker, as in AV. John 8. 11 Hath no man condemned thee?... No man.. *Neither* doe I condemne thee: in the 20th c. translation: Did no one condemn you? No one.... *Nor* do I condemn you.

A repetition of the negation is very frequent in these sentences: Sh. Merch. III. 4. 11 I neuer did repent for doing good, Nor shall not now | id. Ven. 409 I know not loue (quoth he) nor will not know it | Bacon (q Bøgholm 86 with other examples) nor they will not utter the other | Congreve 231 I don't quarrel at that, nor I don't think but your conversation was innocent | ib. 251 | Swift J. 61 nor you shall not know till I see you again | ib. 115 Steele.... came not, nor never did twice, since I knew him | Wordsworth P. 8. 451 nor shall we not be tending towards that point | Hazlitt A. 15 I have never told any one: nor I should not have mentioned it now, but.... | ib. 23 I cannot live without you — nor I will not | ib. 97 I never saw anything like her, nor I never shall again | Swinburne S. b. S. 42 For the life of them vanishes and is no more seen, Nor no more known [probably in imitation of El.E.].

Bacon, according to Bøgholm B. 85, nearly always carries through the distinction *neither* + vb. + subj. (neither do I say) without *not*, and *nor* + subj. + vb. with *not* or other negative (nor they will not utter); it will be seen from my examples that the latter construction is the more frequent one with other writers as well.

Instead of *neither* or *nor* we have also the combination

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*no more* (cf. French above), as in Jerrold C. 60 I don't like W. *No more* do I much (this *much* shows that *no more* is used without any consciousness of its original meaning) | Hughes T. 2. 133 Brown says you don't believe that. *No more* I do. — The same with repeated negation BJons. 3. 182 I would swear to speak ne'er a word to her. By this light, *no more* I will *not*. — Cf. also Di. D. 132 (vg.) *nor more* you wouldn't!

(6) n A nc<sup>1</sup> B nc<sup>2</sup>.

This differs from (5) in having a supplementary connective placed after B.

*Nor* with subsequent (*nother* or) *neither*: More U. 197 nor so *nother* | Sh. Cæs. II. 1. 327 It is not for your health. . . . Nor for yours *neither* | Sh. As. I. 2. 31 loue no man in good earnest, nor no further in sport *neyther* | Milton A. 34 it stops but one breach of licence, nor that *neither* | Congreve 267 nor I do not know her if I see her; nor you *neither* | Swift J. 364 I can know nothing, nor themselves *neither* || ib. 130 I could not keep the toad from drinking himself, nor he would not let me go *neither*, nor Masham, who was with us.

(7) n A n B nc.

Here the connexion between the two negative ideas is not thought of till both have been fully expressed, and *neither* comes as an afterthought at the very last. Examples: Sh. LL. IV. 3. 191 it makes nothing sir. If it marre nothing *neither*, The treason and you goe in peace away together | Defoe G. 66 I'll not spend beyond it. I'll ne're run in debt *neither* | id R. 2. 47 they would not eat themselves, and would not let others eat *neither* | id. R. 312 | Fielding T. 4. 302 To which the other making no answer. . . . Allworthy made no answer to this *neither* | Scott Iv. 481 blush not. . . . and do not laugh *neither* | Austen M. 25 I hope things are not so very bad with you *neither* | Ruskin P. 1. 53 I had no companions to quarrel

with, neither | ib. 2. 130 Fifteen feet thick, of not flowing, but flying water; not water, neither, — melted glacier rather (frequent in Ru., e. g. P. 2. 288, Sel. 1. 206, C. 201) | Shaw C. 147 I did not come to recommend myself. . . . and Miss C. might not think it any great recommendation neither.

Instead of the afterthought-*neither* which we have now seen so frequently in this chapter most people now prefer *either*, which seems to have come into use in the 19th c., probably through the war waged at schools against double negatives. Examples after negative expressions: Scott (NED) Thy sex cannot help that either | Browning 1. 524 [I] am unmoved by men's blame or their praise either | Doyle M. 130 poor chap, he had little enough to be cheery over either | Benson D. 10 Maud, tell the boy he need not wait. You needn't either, unless you like.

After a positive expression *either* is used as an afterthought adverb to emphasize the existence of alternatives; the NED has an example from ab. 1400; Shakespeare has it once only: Tw. II. 5. 206 "Wilt thou set thy foote o' my necke?" "Or o' mine either?" Cf. also Di (q) A beautiful figure for a nutcracker, or for a firebox, either Kingsley H. 274 Ah, if all my priests were but like them; or my people either!

As this use after a positive expression is much older than that after a negative, Storm (E. Ph. 698) cannot be right in believing that the former is "ubertragen" from the latter.

It should be noted that we have very frequently sentences connected with previous *positive* sentences in the same ways as we have seen in types (5, 6, 7) with negative ones. This generally serves to point out a contrast, but sometimes the logical connexion between the two sentences is very weak, and the final *neither* then merely "clinches the argument" by making the negative very emphatic. In Sh. Hml. III. 2. 4 ff. we have two illustrations corresponding to types (5) and (7): Speake the speech as I pronounc'd it. . . . But if you mouth it, as many of your players do, I had as liue the town-cryer had spoke my lines: *Nor* do not saw the ayre with your hand thus. . . . Be not too tame *neither*.

Other examples: Sh. Cæs. 1. 2. 238 I sawe Marke Antony offer him a crowne, yet 'twas not a crowne neyther, 'twas

one of these coronets | Swift J. 66 the best thing is Dr. Swift's on Vanbrugh; which I do not reckon so very good neither | ib. 121 there, I say, get you gone; no, I will not push you neither, but hand you on one side | Defoe R. 5 I resolv'd to run quite away from him. However, I did not act so hastily neither as my first heat of resolution prompted | Wordsworth 109 I travelled among unknown men, In lands beyond the sea; Nor, England! did I know till then What love I bore to thee. — Cf. also the frequent literary formulas of transition "Nor is this all" and "Nor do we stop here".

While this use of *nor* is perfectly natural, there is another way of using it which is never found in prose though it is a favourite formula with some poets. *Nor* here connects not two complete sentences, but only two verbs, of which the first is to be taken in a positive sense (cf. Dyboski, Tennysons sprache u. stil 2). Thus Tennyson 208 Ida stood nor spoke (= 'she stood and did not speak, she stood without speaking') | id. 219 He that gain'd a hundred fights, Nor ever [= and never] lost an English gun | Browning 1. 518 it concerns you that your knaves Pick up a manner nor discredit you [= and (do) not] | ib. 522 things we have passed Perhaps a hundred times nor cared to see | ib. 582 wait death nor be afraid!

These instances may be compared with the ON quotations given by Neckel p. 10: sat hann, né hann svaf, ávalt | gumnum hollr, né gulli, etc.

The negative connectives *neither* and *nor*, which we have treated in this chapter, are characteristic elements of idiomatic English: thus *nor do I see any reason* is always preferred to *and I see also no reason* (cf. the cause of this, above p. 58). In some few cases, however, we find *also* in a negative sentence, but there is generally some special reason for its use, as in Defoe Pl. 44 But I must *also not* forget that. . . . (*not forget* = 'remem-

ber') | Wells Br. 117 but then too was there *not also* a national virtue ? (= wasn't there a n. v. besides) | ib. 194 **Everything** may recover. But *also nothing* may recover (*also* = there is another possibility) | Dickinson C. 6 No one is tied, but *also no one* is rooted (= but on the other hand, no one; the contrast is expressed more elegantly than in: but neither is any one rooted).

In rare instances a negative is put only with one of two (or three) verbs though it belongs to both (or all): Ch. A. 507 He sette nat his benefice to hyre, And leet his sheep encombred in the myre, And ran to London.... But dwelte at hoom [Skeat: we should now say — 'nor left'] | Devil Edm. 524 Didst thou not write thy name in thine own blood and drewst the formall deed | Cowper 323 The winds play no longer and sing in the leaves [= no longer p. and s.].

A frequent way of making one *not* serve to negative two verbs is seen in "The winds *do not play and sing* in the leaves" (... *are not playing and singing*...).

In Dan. *ikke* sometimes is put only with the last of two verbs connected by means of *og*, but only when their signification is closely related as in Goldschm. 8. 60 "jeg hykler og lyver ikke"; otherwise *ikke* has to be repeated: "han spillede ikke klaver og sang ikke (heller)". But if the first verb indicates only a more or less insignificant state or circumstance of the main action denoted by the second verb, *ikke* is put with the first verb: "sid ikke dær og sov" | "jeg går ikke hen og glemmer det". The explanation is that *og* in this case is a disguised *at*, originally followed by the infinitive, see Dania 3. 167 ff., 249 ff.

Where a positive and a negative sentence are combined, English uses the adversative conjunction *but* (like Dan. *men*, G. *aber*), whereas French prefers *et*: I eat, but I don't drink | the guard dies, but does not surrender: je mange, et je ne bois pas | la garde meurt et ne se rend pas. Negation thus is



more vividly present in an English consciousness than in a French mind, since the combination of positive and negative is always felt as a contrast.

## CHAPTER XI<sup>1</sup>

### English Verbal Forms in -n't.

*Not* was attracted to the verb, even before it was reduced to *n't* as an integral part of a coalesced verbal form; thus instead of *will I not* we find *wol not I* as early as Ch. (A.3131); both positions in Ch. E. 250 *Wol nat oure lord yet leve his vanytee ? Wol he nat wedde ?*

From MnE. times may be noted:

Caxton R. 84 *art not thou pryamus sone . . . art not thou one of the possessours* | Roister 52 *Will not ye, then will they* | ib. 56 *Did not you make me a letter* | ib. 79 *do not ye . . .* | ib. 79 *be not ye . . .* | Sh. R. 3. I. 2. 117 *Is not the causer . . .* | ib. 1. 4. 286 *So do not I* | ib. III. 2. 6 *Cannot thy master sleep* | ib. III. 4. 29 *Had not you come* | Sh. LLL. IV. 1. 51 *Are not you* | Sh. Tw. III. 4. 202 *Now will not I deliuer his letter* | Sh. As. IV. 1. 89 *Am not I your Rosalind* | AV. Psalm. 139. 21 *Doe not I hate them . . . and am not I grieved* | Fielding 3. 431 *did not I execute the scheme, did not I run the whole risque ? Should not I have suffered the whole punishment if I had been taken, and is not the labourer worthy of his hire ?* | ib. 448 *were not these men of honour ?* | Franklin 159 *Had not you better sell them ?* | Austen P. 40 *They are wanted in the farm, Mr. Bennet, are not they ? (thus continually in conversations ib. : is not he . . . will not you . . . could not he . . &c)* | Beaconsfield L. 7. . . . *had not he instinctively felt . . .*

<sup>1</sup> This and the following two chapters deal exclusively with English grammar.

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There is some vacillation between the two word-orders; in Sh. Ro. 1786 we have "Doth not she thinke me an old murtherer", but Q. 1 has "Doth she not . . ." Swift in his "Journal to Stella" generally has "did not I", "should not I", etc., but sometimes as p. 17 "Did I not say"; and the latter word-order is even nowadays affected by many writers, though "Didn't I say" has now for generations been the only natural form in everyday speech.

The contracted forms seem to have come into use in speech, though not yet in writing, about the year 1600. In a few instances (extremely few) they may be inferred from the metre in Sh., though the full form is written, thus Oth. IV. 2. 82. *Are not* you a strumpet? No, as I am a Christian | ib. IV. 2. 161 But neuer taynt my loue. I *cannot* say Whore (but *Cant* in Alls I. 3. 171 F. stands for *can it* [be]). — Van Dam's examples (Sh.'s Prosody and Text p. 155) are most of them questionable, and some unquestionably wrong. König (Der vers in Sh's dramen 39) has only the following instances Oth. IV. 2. 161 (as above), H 6A. II. 2. 47 (may not), H5. IV. 5. 6 (but the folio arranges the line: O meschante Fortune, do not runne away — with *do not* as two syllables), Err. II. 1. 68 (know not; line metrically doubtful).

In writing the forms in *n't* make their appearance about 1660 and are already frequent in Dryden's, Congreve's, and Farquhar's comedies. Addison in the *Spectator* nr. 135 speaks of *mayn't*, *can't*, *sha'n't*, *won't*, and the like as having "very much untuned our language, and clogged it with consonants". Swift also (in the Tatler nr. 230) brands as examples of "the continual corruption of our English tongue" such forms as *cou'dn't*, *ha'n't*, *can't*, *shan't*: but nevertheless he uses some of them very often in his *Journal to Stella*.

Among the forms there are some that are so simple that they call for no remark, thus

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*mayn't* [meɪnt]  
*hadn't* [hædnt]  
*didn't* [dɪdnt]  
*couldn't* [kudnt]  
*wouldn't* [wudnt]  
*shouldn't* [ʃudnt]  
*mighn't* [maɪnt]  
*daren't* [dæʔnt]  
*mustn't* [mʌsnt] with natural dropping of [t]

MEG. I. 7. 73.

Thus also

*hasn't* [hæznt]  
*isn't* [ɪznt]  
*doesn't* [dʌznt]  
*haven't* [hævnt]  
*aren't* [aːnt]

are simple enough, but it should be noted that these are recent restitutions after *has*, *is*, etc., which have succeeded, partially at least, in ousting other forms developed formerly through phonetic shortening, see below.

*Cannot* [kæn(n)ɒt] becomes *can't* with a different vowel, long [aː]; Otway 288 writes *cannot*, but pronounces it in one syllable. Congreve 268 has *can't*. In the same way, with additional dropping of [l], *shall not* becomes [ʃaːnt]. The spelling was not, and is not yet, settled; NED. records *sha'nt* from 1664, *shan't* from 1675, *shann't* from 1682 (besides Dryden's *shan'not* 1668); now both *shan't* and *sha'n't* are in use. For the long [aː] in these see MEG. I. 10. 552.

In a similar way I take it that *am not* has become [aːnt] with lengthening of the vowel and dropping of [m]. This may have been the actual pronunciation meant by the spelling *an't* (cf. *can't*, *shan't*) in earlier times, see e. g. Swift P. 90 I a'n't well (also ib. 97) | id. J. 75 I an't vexed | 83 I an't

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sleepy | 152 an't I | Defoe. G. 98 I an't to be a tradesman; I am to be a gentleman: I an't to go to school | Congreve 250 I an't deaf | id. 251 I an't calf enough | Sheridan 208 (Sir Oliver) | id. 211 (Sir Peter) | Austen S. 280 I an't the least astonished at it | Dickens X. 59 (vg.) I an't so fond of his company | Bennett W. 1. 152 An't I good enough? | James A. 1. 37 You are what my wife calls intellectual. I an't, a bit. Cf. below on *ain't*.

Elphinstone 1765 (1. 134) mentions *an't* for *am not* with 'sinking' of *m* and *o*, but does not specify the vowel sound.

Nowadays [a'nt] is frequently heard, especially in tag-questions: I'm a bad boy [a'nt ai?]; but when authors want to write it, they are naturally induced to write *aren't*, as *r* has become mute in such combinations, and the form then looks as if it originated in a mistaken use of the plural instead of the singular (which is in itself absurd, as no one would think of using [a'nt it] or [a'nt hi']). I find the spelling *aren't* I or *arn't* I pretty frequently in George Eliot (M. 1. 34, 43, 63, 2. 164; A. 441, 451, S. 84, 226), but only to represent vulgar or dialectal speech. In the younger generation of writers, however, it is also found as belonging to educated speakers: Wilde Im 10 I am always smart. Aren't I? | Benson D. 126 Aren't I a wise woman? | id. D. 2. 192 I am a very wonderful woman, aren't I | ib. 297 | Benson N. 319 [aristocrat:] I'm a first-class ass, aren't I | Hope C. 100 you are precious lucky. — Yes, aren't I? | Pinero Q. 203 Well, aren't I, my lord? | Wells N. 513 [an M. P.:] Aren't I in a net? | id. H. 41 | id. V. 245 (Ann. Ver. herself) | Hankin 3. 55 I *am* pretty, aren't I? | Galsworthy P. 2. 57 Aren't I going to get you to do your frock? | ib. 73 | Bennett T. 53 I'm always right, aren't I? | id. C. 1. 113 | Oppenheim M. 180 aren't I lucky?

This form is mixed up with other forms in Quiller Couch

T. 113 That's a wall, ain't et ? An' I'm a preacher, arn't I ?  
An' you be worms, bain't 'ee ?

The form [a'nt ai] is found convenient and corresponds to the other *n't*-forms; it obviates the clumsy *am I not* and the unpronounceable *amn't I*, which I find written in Ol. Schreiner's Peter Halket 202. — But as [a'nt] may be taken as developed from *aren't*, it may sometimes in children's speech lead to the substitution of *are* for *am* in positive sentences, as when one of Darwin's little boys remarked: 'I are an extraordinary grass-finder' (Darwin L. 1. 116).

*Are not* becomes [arnt], which regularly becomes [a'nt]; we find spellings like Swift P. 90 ar'n't you sorry | 94 ar'n't you ashamed ?

Thus frequently in 19th c.

But there is also another frequent form, which *may* have developed phonetically from the older alternate form with long ME. [a:] see MEG. I. 4. 432, and dropping of *r* (ib. 7. 79); this gives the result [eint]; cf. the spellings in Swift J. 81 an't you an impudent slut | ib. 93, 131 | Defoe G. 129 An't you rich | Fielding T. 4. 99 (Mrs. Honour) a'n't (3d person pl.) | ib. 1. 86 you an't | ib. 4. 256 you ant | Austen S. 234 [lady:] they are very pretty, an't they | ib. 237 you an't well | an't in Trollope B. also in the speech of educated people, e. g. 411, 483 || Austen S. 196 [old lady:] Mind me, now, if they ain't married by Midsummer | Shaw C. 116 youre joking, ant you ? | Norris P. 245 Ain't you glad you aren't short of wheat.

*Ain't* in the first person sg. probably has arisen through morphological analogy, as nowhere else the persons were distinguished in the *-nt*-forms. Examples: Tenn. L. 2. 21 Ain't I a beast for not answering you before ? | Mered H. 346 (young lord:) I ain't a diplomatist. It is probable that some at least of the 19th c. quotations above for *an't I* are meant as [eint ai].

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*Have not* became [heint]; note the older pronunciation of *have* as [heiv], also [hei], written so often *ha'* (Sh. Wint. I. 2. 267 *Ha' not* (2. syll.) *you seene Camillo*); the spelling *han't* or *ha'n't* is frequent, e. g. Congreve 230 *han't you four thousand pounds* | Swift P. 32, 92 *you ha'n't*, 155 *I han't* | Swift J. 22 *Han't I*, ib. 40, 43, 63 etc. | Defoe R. 2. 164 *I han't* | id. G. 129, 132 | Fielding 1. 377 *han't you heard* | Sheridan 290 *I ha'n't a moment to lose* | Hardy R. 34 *I han't been* | id. L. 201 *Ha'n't I mused her?*

Instead of *han't* the spelling *ain't* also occurs as a vulgarism (*h* dropped).

*Do not* becomes *don't* [dount], which is found, e. g., in Swift J. 17, etc., Defoe G. 12, 45, 137, and innumerable times since then.

For *will not* we have *won't* [wount], developed (through *wonnot*, found in Dryden and other writers of that time) from the ME. form *wol*. It is written *wont* in Defoe R. 2. 166, but generally *won't*, thus Rehearsal 41, Congreve 237, Farquhar B. 335, Defoe G. 48, 66, Fielding T. 1. 237, etc., etc.

The [s] was frequently dropped in *isn't*, *wasn't*, *doesn't*, (thus expressly Elphinstone 1765 I. 134) and this gives rise to various forms of interest. For *isn't* we find *'ent* (facilitatis causa, Cooper 1685) and in the 18th c. the form *i'n't*, which Fitzedward Hall (M. 236) quotes from Foote, Richardson, and Miss Burney. But the vowel is unstable; Swift P. 32 writes *e'n't*; and if we imagine a lowering and lengthening of the vowel (corresponding pretty exactly to what happened in *don't*, *won't*, and really also in *can't*, etc.), this would result in a pronunciation [eint]; now this must be written *an't* or *ain't*, and would fall together with the form mentioned above as possibly developed from *aren't*. *An't* is found in the third person as early as Swift J. 105 *Presto is plaguy silly to-night, an't he?* | ib. 147 *An't that right now?* | 179 *it an't my fault* | 273 In the 19th c. *an't* and *ain't* are frequent for *is not* in

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representations of vulgar speech; see quotations in Storm Eph. 709 and Farmer & Henley, also e.g. Austen S. 125 I don't pretend to say that there ain't | ib. 270 What an ill-natured woman his mother is, an't she ? | ib. 287 if Lucy an't there.

But now it is not felt as so vulgar as formerly; Dean Alford (Q. 71) says: "It ain't certain. I ain't going . . . very frequently used, even by highly educated persons". And in Anthony Hope (F. 40, 45, C. 57) people of the best society are represented as saying *it ain't* and *ain't it*. Dr. Furnivall, to mention only one man, was particularly fond of using this form.

The form *wa'nt* or *wa'n't* for *was not* is pretty frequent in Defoe, e.g. G. 51 you was . . . wa'nt you ? | id. R. 8 I warrant you were frighted, wa'n't you.

I find the same form frequently in American writers: Howells S. 10 we wa'n't ragged | ib. 15 I wa'n't (often, in all persons) | London V. 329 he wa'n't | Page J. 350 (vg.) I wa'n't after no money . . . 'T wa'n't me.

A variant is written *warn't*, where *r* of course is mute, the sound represented being [wɔːnt]; it is frequent vulgarly in Dickens, e.g. Do. 77 If I warn't a man a on small annuity | ib. 223 (vg) it warn't him | id. F. 24 see if he warn't | Galsworthy P. 86.

*Don't* for *does not* is generally explained from a substitution of some other person for the third person; but as this is not a habitual process, — as *do* in the third person sg. is found only in some few dialects, but not in standard English, and as the tendency is rather in the reverse direction of using the verb form in *s* with subjects of the other persons (*says I, they talks*, etc.), the inference is natural that we have rather a phonetic process, *s* being absorbed before *nt* as in *isn't*, etc., above. The vowel in [daʊnt] must have developed in the same way as in *do not*, if we admit that the mutescence of *s*

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took place before the vowel in *does* was changed into [ʌ]. *Don't* in the third person is found in Farquhar B. 321, in Defoe G. 47 (my brother don't kno'), Sheridan D. 277 and very frequently in the 19th c. Byron uses it repeatedly in the colloquial verse of *Don Juan*, (3. 10, 9. 44, 10. 51, 13. 35, 14. 29), where *doesn't* is probably never found, though *does not* and *doth not* are found. Dickens has it constantly in his dialogues, chiefly, but not exclusively, in representing the speech of vulgar people (see e. g. Do. 13, 16, 22, 31; D. 84, 188, 191, 376, 476, 590; X. 45 educated young man); and he sometimes even uses it in his own name (as Do. 500 How Susan does it, she don't know | ib. 541 he don't appear to break his heart). The form is used constantly in the conversations in such books as Hughes's *Tom Brown*. Kingsley H. 76 makes a well-bred man say "She don't care" (cf. ib. 146), similarly Meredith H. 489 an M.P., Philips L. 226 a perfect gentleman, Egerton K. 101 a lady. That this use of *don't* could not by any means be called a vulgarism nowadays, however much schoolmasters may object to it, will also appear from the following quotations (the two last American): Shelley L. 727 I have just heard from Peacock, saying, that he don't think that my tragedy will do, and that he don't much like it | Austen S. 193 it don't signify talking | Ward F. 184 [a lord:] Well, it don't matter | id. M. 86 [a celebrated traveller:] that don't matter | id. E. 64 [a young diplomatist:] It don't sound much | ib. 65 he don't take Manisty at his own valuation | ib. 254 [an ambassador:] That don't count | ib. 258 [a lady:] He don't care | Shaw D. 93 Sir Patrick: Why dont he live for it ? (cf. id. 1. 4, 174, 178, 179, 203, 204, etc.) | Wells L. 19 it don't matter a bit (said Mr. Lewisham) | Norris O. 231 it stands to reason, don't it ? | Herrick M. 187 it don't make any difference.

Here, as with *ain't*, the distinction of person and number has been obliterated in the negative forms.



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*Daren't* stands for both *dare not* (*dares not*) and *dared not*, the latter through a natural phonetic development (MEG. I. 7. 72; cf. also ESt. 23. 461). The use in the present needs no exemplification (Shaw 1. 198 I darent talk about such things); in the preterite we have, e. g. Thack P. 3. 83 Her restlessness wakened her bedfellows more than once. She daren't read more of Walter Lorraine: Father was at home, and would suffer no light | Ward D. 1. 99 Her spirit failed her a little. She daren't climb after him in the dark | Kipl. L. 126 the ship's charts were in pieces and our ships daren't run south | Shaw. 2. 195 you know you darent have given the order if you hadnt seen us | id. C. 114 otherwise I darent have brought you here | Bennett T. 326 We were halted before I could see. And I daren't look round.

*Dare not* is often written as a preterite, even by authors who do not use *dare* (without *not*) as a preterite; this of course represents a spoken [dæ'ənt]. (Tennyson, Doyle, Kipling, Shaw, Hall Caine, Parker).

There is a negative form of the (obsolescent) preterite *durst*, in which the first *t* is often omitted; it is sometimes used as a present (thus a Norfolk speaker, Di. D. 407; Captain Cuttle id. Do. 75). Recent examples, to which are added after || some dialectal forms: Kipl. SS. 166 they dursn't do it | Shaw. 2. 91 They dussent ave nothink to do with me || Masefield E. 39 I durn't | Barrie MO. 100 daurnd | Twain H. 1. 17 I dasn't scratch it.

The sound [t] is also left out in the colloquial form [ju'snt] for *used not*; an American lady told me that this was childish: "no grown-up person in America would say so", but in England it is very often heard, and also often written, see Pinero S. 189 my face is covered with little shadows that usen't to be there | Wilde W. 37 I usen't to be one of her admirers, but I am now | Shaw C. 11 Usent it to be a lark ? | ib. 193 I'm blest if I usent to have to put him up | id. J. 255, M. 192, 202 | Hankin 2. 47

Usen't we to be taught that it was our duty to love our enemies? | Benson D. 2. 288 Usen't the monks to keep peas in their boots?

*Ben't* seems now extinct except in dialects (*bain't*); it was heard in educated society in Swift's time, see P. 105 if you ben't hang'd | ib. 110 if that ben't fair, hang fair.

Dialectal *n't*-forms for the second person sg. occur, for instance in Fielding T. (Squire Western): *shatunt* '(thou) shalt not', *wout unt* = 'wouldst not', *at'n't* or *at unt* 'art not', and others.

For *needn't* I find an abbreviated American form several times in Opie Read's *Toothpick Tales*, e. g. 108 yer neenter fly off'n the handle.

There is a curious American form *whyn't* = 'why didn't' or 'why don't' (Payne, Alab. Wordl.); in Page J. 57 a negro asks: *Whyn't* you stay?

In children's speech there is a negative form corresponding to *you better do that* (from *you'd better*), namely *Bettern't you* = 'had you not better'; Sully St. of Childh. 177.

The *n't* forms are colloquial, but may be heard in university lectures, etc. They are not, however, used much in *reading*, and it sounds hyper-colloquial, in some cases even with a comical tinge, when too many *don't*, *isn't* are substituted for *do not*, *is not*, etc. in reading serious prose aloud. In poetry the contracted forms are justified only where other colloquial forms are allowed, e. g. Byron D. J. 5. 6 They vow to amend their lives, and yet they don't; Because if drown'd, they can't — if spared, they won't.

Naturally the full forms admit of greater emphasis on the negative element than the contracted forms; [kænət] is hardly ever heard in colloquial speech unless exceptionally stressed, and then the second syllable may have even stronger

stress than the first (cf. the italics in Di. D. 241 I cannot say — I really *cannot* say). In Byron's DJ. a distinction seems to be carried through between *cannot* when the stress is on *can*, and *can not* when it is on *not*. *Will not* is more emphatic than *won't* in Ridge G. 219 "I won't have it! I will not have it!" But this does not apply to the two forms in Pinero Q. 213 It's not true! it isn't true! — The difference between the full and the contracted form is sometimes that between a special and a rexi negative (see ch. V. ); cf. Sweet, NEG. § 366: "In fact such sentences [as *he is not a fool*] have in the spoken language two forms (hij iznt ə fuwl) and (hijz not ə fuwl). In the former the negation being attached specially to an unmeaning form-word must necessarily logically modify the whole sentence, just as in *I do not think so* (ai dount piŋk sou), so that the sentence is equivalent to 'I deny that he is a fool'. In the other form of the sentence the *not* is detached from the verb, and is thus at liberty to modify the following noun, so that the sentence is felt to be equivalent to *he is no fool*, where there can be no doubt that the negative adjective-pronoun *no* modifies the noun, so that (hijz not ə fuwl) is almost equivalent to 'I assert that he is the opposite of a fool'."

On the distinction between *may not* and *mayn't*, *must not* and *mustn't* in some cases see p. 94 ff.

The contracted forms are very often used in tag questions (He is old, isn't he? | you know her, don't you? etc.), and in such questions as are hardly questions at all, but another form of putting a positive assertion: Isn't he old? = 'he is very old' (you cannot disagree with me on that point) | Don't you know? = 'you surely must know'. In a real question, therefore, it is preferable to say and write, for instance: "Did I meet the lady when I was with you? If not, *did you not* know her at that time?" because "... didn't you know her?" would seem to admit of only one reply.

With regard to the standing of the contracted forms and the way in which they are regarded by the phonetician as opposed to many laymen, there is a characteristic passage in H. C. Wyld's *Hist. Study of the Mother Tongue*, p. 379: "We occasionally hear peculiarly flagrant breaches of polite usage, such as (iz not it) for (iznt it) or (æm not ai), for the now rather old-fashioned, but still commendable, (sint ai) or the more usual and familiar (a'nt ai), or, in Ireland, (æmnt ai). These forms, which can only be based upon an uneasy and nervous stumbling after 'correctness', are perfectly indefensible, for no one ever uttered them naturally and spontaneously. They are struck out by the individual, in a painful gasp of false refinement".

In Northern English and Sc. we have an enclitic *-na* (<OE *nā*); thus frequently in GE. A. *donna*, *mustna*, *wasna*, *wonna*, *thee artna*, *ye arena*: in Burns *dinna*, *winna*, *wadna*, *wasna*, etc. — *Canna* is used by Goldsmith 560 as *vg.*, not as specifically Sc.

## CHAPTER XII

### But.

The word *but*, in many of its applications, has a negative force. At first it is a preposition, OE *be-utan*, formed like *without*, and acquiring the same negative signification as that word. But gradually it came to be used in a variety of ways not shared by *without*. It is only with the negative applications that we are here concerned.

*But* is a kind of negative relative pronoun, meaning 'that (who or which)...not', but only used after a negative expression.

Examples: Sh. Err. IV. 3. 1 There's not a man I meete  
but doth salute me | Merch III. 2. 81 There is no vice so

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simple, but assumes Some marke of vertue on his outward parts | *Lr.* II. 4. 71 there's not a nose among twenty, but can smell him that's stinking | *Milton A.* 56 seeing no man who hath tasted learning, but will confesse the many waies of profiting | *Walton A.* 15 there are none that deserve commendation but may be justified | *Ruskin Sel.* 1. 370 there is no existing highest-order art but is decorative | *Stevenson B.* 110 there was not one but had been guilty of some act of oppression | *Dickinson S.* 117 I see around me none but are shipwrecked too.

In most cases the relative pronoun represented by *but* is the subject of the clause; but it may also be the object of a verb; rarely, however, the object of a preposition placed at the end of the clause: *Sh. Mcb.* 1. 6. 9 no iutty, frieze, Buttrice, nor coigne of vantage, but this bird Hath made his pendent bed || *Ruskin Sel.* 1. 261 there is not a touch of Vandyck's pencil but he seems to have revelled on.

This relative *but* is extremely frequent after an incomplete sentence (without a verb), as in *Sh. Alls.* II. 3. 68 Not one of those, but had a noble father | *Lamb. R.* 39 Not a tree, not a bush, scarce a wildflower in their path, but revived in Rosamund some recollection | *Quincey* 418 and probably not one of the whole brigade but excelled myself in personal advantages | *Carlyle H.* 132 no one of us, I suppose, but would find it a very rough thing | *Thack N.* 205 Not one of the Gandishites but was after a while well inclined to the young fellow | *Ruskin S.* 46 nothing so great but it [a mob] will forget in an hour | *Stevenson IHF.* 8 no gentleman but wishes to avoid a scene.

The negative idea that conditions this use of *but* may be expressed indirectly, or it may be what has been termed above an incomplete negative. It is sometimes wrongly asserted that Shakespeare did not use this *but* after an interrogative sentence with negative import. Examples: *Sh. Ven.* 565 What waxe

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so frozen but dissolves with tempring? | *Lucr.* 414 What could he see but mightily he noted? What did he note, but strongly he desired? | *Milton SA.* 834 what murderer. . . . but may plead it | *Pope RL.* 1. 95 What tender maid but must a victim fall To one man's treat, but for another's ball? || *Thack N.* 674 Scarce a man but felt Barnes was laughing at him | *ib.* 235 There is scarce any parent however friendly with his children, but must feel sometimes that they have thoughts which are not his or hers | *Spencer Ed.* 22 Scarcely a locality but has its history of fortunes thrown away over some impossible project | *Galsworthy F.* 277 Scarcely a word of the evening's conversation but gave him. . . . the feeling. . . . | *Lamb. E.* 2. 219 Few young ladies but in this sense keep a dog | *Wells T.* 111 And few of the men who were there but judged me a happy man | *Bennett C.* 1. 102 Few of these men but at some time of their lives had worn the clog.

In some cases *but* is followed by a personal pronoun in such a way that both together make up a relative pronoun (*but they* = 'who. . . . not', etc.); the phenomenon may be compared with the popular use of *that* or *which* followed by *he* or *him*, etc. *But*, in this case, is not a real relative pronoun, but rather a "relative connective". Examples: *Malory* 732 there were but few knyghtes in all the courte, but they demed the quene was in the wronge | *Sh. Mcb.* III. 4. 131 There's not a one of them but in his house I keepe a seruant feed | *Stevenson MP.* 161 You can propound nothing but he has a theory about it ready-made | *id. B.* 115 Not a man but he is some deal heartened up | *Ruskin Sel.* 1. 172 not one great man of them, but he will puzzle you, if you look close, to know what he means | *Wilde S.* 81 Women are a decorative sex. They never have anything to say but they say it charmingly [with intentional ambiguity].

In the same sense as the relative pronoun *but* we have also, from the beginning of the 18th c., the combination

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*but what.* As applied to persons (= who..not) this is now vulgar, but does not seem to have always been felt as such: Swift J. 489 there is not one of the Ministry but what will employ me | Defoe R. 2. 4 I had no agreeable diversion but what had some thing or other of this in it | Goldsmith 6 scarce a farmer's daughter within ten miles round but what had found him successful | Austen E. 29 not that I think Mr. M. would ever marry any body but what had had some education | id. P. 306 there is not one of his tenants but what will give him a good name | Quincey 220 political economy.... is eminently an organic science (no part, but what acts on the whole, as the whole again reacts on and through each part) | G.E. A. 98 There's nobody round that hearth but what's glad to see you | Benson D. 2. 129 there is nothing else about me but what is intolerable | Bennett A. 20 there is no village lane within a league but what offers a travesty of rural charms.

*But* as a conjunction = 'that not' is frequent in an object clause after a negative expression, e. g. Sh. Ro. V. 3. 132 my master knowes not but I am gone hence | Ado I. 3. 32 it must not be denied but I am a plaine dealing villaine | Mids. II. 1. 237 do not beleue But I shall doe thee mischief in the wood | Walton A. 11 then doubt not but the art will prove like a vertue | Bunyan P. 75 I know not but some other enemy may be at hand | ib. 233 | Congreve 130 I don't know but she may come this way | Spect. 5 it is not impossible, but I may make discoveries | Swift J. 284 I doubt not but it will take | Defoe R. 25 I make no doubt but he reacht it with ease | Fielding 3. 420 I make no question, but I shall be able to introduce you | Goldsmith 16 Nor can I deny but I have an interest in being first | Wordsworth P. 5. 81 Much I rejoiced, not doubting but a guide was present | GE. A. 247 there was no knowing but she might have been childish enough |

Stevenson B. 113 Doubt not but he will lend a favourable ear.

*But* evidently in all these cases means the same thing to the popular speech instinct; it stands as the natural conjunction where the notion is negative. But it is easy to see that it really stands for two strictly opposite ideas, according as the main sentence is simply negative or doubly negative, i. e. positive. In the former case *but* gives a negative force to the dependent clause, in the latter case it does not. Thus, the first quotation from Sh. means 'my master knows not otherwise than that I am gone hence', he believes that I am gone, he does not know that I am not gone; but in the second quotation, if for "it must not be denied" we substitute the equivalent "it is certain", we must say "that I am a plain-dealing villain" without any *not*. The use of *but* in such cases, therefore, is on a par with the redundant use of negatives in popular speech (above, p. 75) and, like that, has now been generally discarded in educated speech and in writing, so that the usual expression now is "it must not be denied that I am. . . ." ('Here, *that* is now considered more logical' NED).

In the same sense *but that* is also used: Sh. Alls. V. 3. 167 I neither can nor will denie, But that I know them | Milton A. 5 deny not but that it is of greatest concernment | ib 28 | Walton A. 11 'tis not to be questioned, but that it is an art | Defoe R. 91 not doubting but that there was more | Fielding T. 3. 81 I made no doubt but that his designs were strictly honourable | Johnson R. 102 I cannot be persuaded but that marriage is one of the means of happiness | Sheridan 273 I have no doubt but that bolts and bars will be entirely useless | Cowper L. 1. 210 it is hardly possible but that some of the family must have been bitten | Franklin 181 not knowing but that he might be in the right | Scott Iv. 288 I fear not but that my father will do his best | Di. Do. 151 they can hardly



persuade themselves but that there is something unbecoming in the conduct | *id.* N. 582 I didn't know but that perhaps somebody might be passing up the stairs | Tennyson 464 Let no man dream but that I love thee still | Trollope W. 115 It is not to be supposed but that much pain will spring out of this question | Ruskin T. 212 I do not doubt but that I shall set many a reader's teeth on edge (*ib.* 148) | *id.* C. 192, 115 | *id.* F. 35 I have no fear but that you will one day understand all my poor words | Ward M. 234 he could not doubt but that she would face it.

And finally *but what* may be used: this however, is recent and generally considered more or less vulgar: *Di.* N. 131 wouldn't it be much nicer....? I don't know but what it would (*ib.* 608) | *GE.* A. 28 There's no knowing but what you may see things different after a while (frequent in *GE.*) | Trollope D. 3. 153 I am not going to say but what I am gratified (*ib.* 230) | *Mered* H. 5 I shouldn't wonder but what that young chap'll want to be a gentleman | *Bennett* A. 209 We'd no thought but what we should bring you thirty pounds in cash | *Housman* J. 333 I shouldn't be surprised but what it could be recognized | *Wells* V. 196 I shall never hear it but what this evening will come pouring back over me | *Norris* O. 546 I am not so sure but what yesterday's terrible affair might have been avoided.

The use of *but what* cannot be easily accounted for: the *NED* attempts no explanation, but simply brands the use as "erroneous" in all cases (*but* 12c, 30). Perhaps *but what* first began in the relative employment (see p. 129f.), where *what* has sometimes approximately its usual force (as in the quotation l. c. from *Defoe*): and as *but what* was thus felt to be the equivalent of *but that*, it was substituted for that combination in other cases as well.

The negative idea in the main sentence may of course be expressed indirectly or by such a word as *little*: *Milton* A. 12

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who denies but that it was justly burnt | Bunyan G. 32 how can you tell but that the Turks had as good scriptures. . . . as we have | Scott Iv. 482 who knows but the devil may fly off with the supper | Browning l. 407 Who knows but the world may end to-night ? | Hewlett Q. 150 there is little doubt but he soon tired.

By the side of the elliptical expression *Not that*. . . . mentioned above (p. 54) we find *not but*, *not but that*, and *not but what*, e. g. Behn 307 not but he confessed Charlot had beauty | Defoe R. 149 not but that the difficulty of launching my boat came into my head | Goldsmith 2 Thus we lived several years in a state of much happiness, not but that we sometimes had little rubs | Cowper L. 1. 328 Not but that I should be very sorry | GE. A. 297 Not but what I'm glad to hear o' anybody respectable coming into the parish | Hankin 2. 10 As long as Wilkins was here things were better. Not but what we had our quarrels even then.

An infinitive is also found after *doubt not but* (obsolete) as in Sh. R. 2. V. 115 I doubt not but to ride as fast as Yorke | Bunyan G. 23 not doubting but to find it presently | Walton A. 17 I doubt not but to relate to you many things | Fielding 3. 548 he doubted not but to subvert any villainous design.

After verbs like *hinder*, *prevent*, *forbid*, etc., the use of *but (that)* = '*that not*' is now obsolete; ex.:·

Sh. Oth. II. 1. 195 The heauens forbid But that our loues and comforts should encrease.

*But (but that, but what)* is also used in the negative sense of '*that. . . .not*' after a comparison with *not so*:

More U. 239 the bandes can neuer be so stronge, but they wyll fynde some hole open to crepe owte at | Sh. Merch. III. 2. 163 she is not yet so old But she may learne. . . . Shee is not bred so dull but she can learne | Milton A. 8 they were not therein so cautious but they were as dissolute in their

promiscuous conversing | Stevenson V. 25 there is nothing so monstrous but we can believe it of ourselves | id. MB. 301 Pepys was not such an ass, but he must have perceived it || Caxton R. 38 I was not so moche a fool but that I fonde the hole | Sh. Mids. III. 2. 298 I am not yet so low, But that my nailes can reach vnto thine eyes | Di. X. 3 he was not so dreadfully cut up by the sad event, but that he was an excellent man of business on the very day of the funeral | Stevenson T. 221 I was not so thoughtless but that I slacked my pace | Hope R. 128 you'll bury the king? 'Not so deep but that we can take him out again' | Harraden S. 11 you are not too ill but that they may be a happiness to you || GE. S. 100 not so long ago but what there were people living who remembered it | Trollope B. 399 she did not however go so fast but what she heard the signora's voice | ib. 452.

Similarly after a comparative: Bunyan G. 24 that I should have no more wit, but to trifle away my time | Caine M. 138 What more natural but there's something for yourself.

*But* was formerly very frequent after *no sooner*, where now *than* is always used; thus also more rarely *but that*. The last quotations show *but* in the same way after similar expressions: Marlowe F. 1191 I was no sooner in the middle of the pond, but my horse vanisht away (thus also Dekker S. 12, 25, Bunyan G. 12, 30 etc. Otway 221, Swift J. 484) | Defoe R. 102 he was no sooner landed, but he moved forward towards me | id. R. 2. 40 | Spect. 92 he no sooner got rid of his enemy, but he marched up to the wood | Franklin 125 || Sh. H. 5. I. 1. 24 The breath no sooner left his fathers body, But that his wildnesse.... Seem'd to dye too || Goldsmith 628 he's scarce gotten out of one scrape, but he's running his head into another (scarce.... but, also Dekker S. 25) | Bunyan P. 3 he had not run far from his own door, but his wife perceiving it, began to cry after him.

*But* serves to introduce the necessary result 'so that . . . not'. The NED says: "Now generally expressed by *without* and gerund: 'you cannot look but you will see it', i. e. without seeing it. Formerly sometimes *but that*." This expression "formerly" perhaps is too severe: I give below an example of *but that* from a very recent (Amr.) novel; also one of *but what*.

It never rains but it pours | Roister 18 ye passe not by, but they laugh | Byron D. J. 3. 108 nothing dies but something mourns | GE. A. 102 I'll not consent but Seth shall have a hand in it too || Williamson L. 87 you can't look up or down the river, but that on every hill you see a château || Stevenson JHF. 178 the child would never pass one of the unfettered but what he spat at him.

*But*, or more frequently *but that*, serves to introduce a clause of condition, = 'if . . . not'; an old combination, which has long been obsolete, was *but if*. Examples of all three: Caxton R. 64 how shold any man handle honny, but yf he lycked his fyngres || Roister 85 this man is angry but he haue his [gains] by and by | Sh. Oth. I. 3. 194 I here do giue thee that with all my heart, Which but thou hast [? for: hadst] already with all my heart I would keepe from thee || Sh. Err. IV. 1. 3 And since I haue not much importun'd you; Nor now I had not, but that I am bound To Persia | Bunyan P. 51 I had been here sooner, but that I slept | ib. 55 I could have staid . . . but that I knew I had further to go | Franklin 40 I should have taken Collins with me but that he was not sober | MacCarthy 2. 151 they would not be mentioned here, but that they serve to explain some misconceptions | Ward M. 78 I would offer myself for the post but that I feel sure that you would never follow anybody's advice | Locke B. V. 64 But that I considered it to be beneath my dignity as a man, I should have wept too.

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The same *but* = 'if not' is also found in the following idiom:

Sh. Merch. III. 1. 75 it shall goe hard but I will better the instruction | Scott Iv. 89 it will go hard with me but I will requite it.

The same idea is very often expressed in betting terms as in the following quotations. But it should be noted that though "ten to one but he comes" means originally 'you may bet ten to one if he does not come', the negative idea has now disappeared, and it means 'the chances are that he does come'; to the old phrase *it is odds but he comes* therefore corresponds the modern *the odds are that he comes*. Besides *but* we find in the 18th c. also *but that*.

Swift J. 26 it is odds but this Mr. Dyot will be hanged | Di N 66 the odds are a hundred to one, but Swillenhause castle would have been.... || B. Jo. 3. 198 'tis twenty to one but we have them | Bunyan P. 143 a hundred to one but he dies there | Defoe R. 2. 189 it would be a thousand to one but he would repent | Spect. 28 it is ten to one but you learn something of her gown | Fielding T. 1. 11 it is two to one but it lives | Austen M. 4 give a girl an education, and introduce her properly into the world, and ten to one but she has the means of settling well || Goldsmith 261 Whenever the people flock to see a miracle, it is a hundred to one but that they see a miracle | Sterne 12 'tis ten to one but that many of them would be worse mounted.

With *but* in the sense 'if...not' should also be placed the common elliptical idiom *but for*: But for him we should have succeeded, i. e. 'if it had not been for him, if he had not hindered it'.

By a curious transition *but* has come to mean the same thing as 'only'; at first it required a preceding negative: *I will not say but one word*, i. e. 'not except (save) one word'.

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compare the form used in nothern dialects *nobbut*. But then the negative was dropped out, and *I will say but one word* came to be used in exactly the same signification. The curious thing is that exactly the same thing has happened in German, where *nur* at first required a negative word before it (it originated in *ne wære*); cf. also vg. Fr. "je dis qu' ça". In English the old negative idiom may still be used to some extent with *can*, as in Byron D. J. 1. 208 I can't but say [= I can but say] | Read K. 64 I can't come to but one conclusion.

Simiilarly in the following sentence the words *for no purpose* might be omitted without changing the meaning of the whole: Macaulay E. 4. 79 lying newspapers were set up for no purpose but to abuse him.

Old examples of *but* in this way after a negative are easily found in the dictionaries; I shall therefore give only one: Ælfric 1. 114 *nan man ne bið gehealden buton þurh gife Hæ- lendes Cristes* (thus before another preposition). The expression is strengthened by *only* in Sh. Merch. III. 5. 51 discourse [will] grow commendable in *none onely but* parrats.

The same redundancy is found when the negative is not expressed: Mi A. 6 I finde *but only* two sorts of writing which the Magistrate car'd to take notice of | Ruskin Sel. 1. 261 caring *only but* to catch the public eye.

As *but* and *only* are thus synonyms, by a natural reaction *only* acquires some of the properties at first belonging exclusively to *but*.

*Only that* comes to mean 'except that' (or something very similar to that) and eventually even 'if . . . not', exactly like *but that*. Examples: [Malory 736 I wille not graunte the thy lyf, only that thou frely relece the quene] | Swift J. 86 I will not answer a word of it, only that I never was giddy since my first fit | Ridge S. 41 he would have been more antagonistic at this stage, only that the doorkeeper's wife was a

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good soul | Hope D. 227 She'd have done it sooner *only* that in her heart she credits me with a tragedy | Doyle S. 4. 116 We should not have troubled you *only* that our friend has been forced to return to the East.

*Only when* = 'except when': GE. A. 110 Do you come every week to see Mrs. P. ? Yes, sir, every Thursday, *only* when she's got to go out with Miss D. | *ib.* 141 I'll never fight any man again, *only* when he behaves like a scoundrel.

*Only* also by itself, without *that*, may stand for 'if . . . not' or at any rate come near to that signification: Thack H. 20 they would have had an answer, *only* the old lady began rattling on a hundred stories | Doyle B. 169 I should not have noticed this one [letter] *only* it happened to come alone | London M. 42 I'd introduce you to her, *only* you'd win her.

*Only for* is sometimes used like the more usual *but for* = 'if it had not been for' (cf. above p. 136): GE. A. 374 I should have thought she was a beggar-woman, *only for* her good clothes | Caine E. 112 *Only for* his exile I shouldn't have been here at all [very frequent in Caine] | Shaw. 1. 143 we should have been here quarter of an hour ago *only for* his nonsense | Birmingham W. 308 *only for* me there'd never have been the pier built | Stacpoole C. 168 he would have sworn that this man was Müller, *only for* the fact that he knew that Müller was dead | London V. 515 he wouldn't have had any community property *only for* you.

In American slang I find *only* with a preceding negative: Ade A. 84 I could *n't* turn up *only* sixty cents. This shows another reaction on the use of *only* from *but*.

Let me also mention the possibility of a negative answer after *only* because it is = *none but*. "If we were to ask the question 'Had you *only* the children with you?' a person south of the Tweed would answer '*no*', and a person north of the Tweed '*yes*', both meaning the same thing—viz, that *only* the children were there. I think I should myself, though a

Southron, answer *yes*". (Quoted from an English correspondent, Storm 703, who also gives literary quotations for *no* in answers to questions with *only*, from Miss Burney, George Eliot, Trollope, Sweet).

## CHAPTER XIII

### Negative Prefixes.

Un-, in-.

The most important negative prefixes are *un-* and *in-*, both etymologically going back to the same Arian form, *n-* (syllabic), reduced from the negative word *ne* (which gave also the Greek *a* "privativum", see below. *Un-* is the native English form, while *in-* is the Latin form, known to the English through numerous French and Latin words, and to some extent also productive in English itself. A good deal of hesitation has prevailed between the two prefixes, though now in most cases one or the other has been definitely preferred. We shall speak first of the form, next of the choice between the two prefixes, and finally of their meaning.

*In-*, according to the rules of Latin phonology, has the alternate forms *ig-* as in *ignoble*, *il-* as in *illiterate*, *im-* as in *impossible*, *ir-* as in *irreligious*.

In a few words, the sound of a word is changed, when this prefix is added:

<i>pious</i> [paɪəs]	<i>impious</i> [ɪmˈpiəs]
<i>finite</i> [faɪnaɪt]	<i>infinite</i> [ɪnˈfɪnɪt]
<i>famous</i> [feɪməs]	<i>infamous</i> [ɪnfəˈmeɪs]

In the last word, the signification too is changed (see p.145).

Pretty often *un-* is preferred before the shorter word, and *in-* before the longer word derived from it, which is generally also of a more learned nature; thus we have



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unable	inability
unjust	injustice
unequal	inequality

Austen P. 239 some excuse for incivility if I *was* uncivil.

*Un-* is preferred where the word has a distinctly native ending, as in

ungrateful	ingratitude.
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Hence also the following examples of participles in *-d* with *un-*, while the adjectives in *-able* have *in-*: Byron Cain I. 1 all the *unnumber'd* and *innumerable* multitudes | Page J. 175 Their faces, *undistinguished* and *indistinguishable* in the crowd | Swinburne Sh. 212 the fragments we possess of Shakespeare's *uncompleted* work are *incomplete* simply because the labour. . . . was cut short by his timeless death | Gissing G. 90 *unmitigated* and *immitigable* | NP. '17 after an *unexplained*, but not *inexplicable* delay.

It should also be noted that while most of the *in-* words are settled once for all, and have to be learned by children as wholes, there is always a possibility of forming new words on the spur of the moment with the prefix *un-*, see, for instance the contrast in Whiteing No. 5. 267 the *irresponsible* and *unresponsive* powers.

Hence also the difference between *unavoidable* from the existing verb *avoid*, and *inevitable*: there is no Engl. verb *evite*.

In other instances we find *un-* alternating with some other prefix in related words:

unfortunate	misfortune
unsatisfactory	dissatisfaction
uncomfortable	discomfort

In a great many cases, the prefix *un-* was formerly used, either alone or concurrently with *in-*, where now the latter is exclusively used. Examples are:

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unactive Sh., Mi.  
uncapable Sh., Defoe, Swift, Spect.  
unconstant Sh., Lyly.  
uncredible More.  
uncurable More, Sh.  
undecent Lyly.  
undocile Defoe.  
unhonest More.  
unmeasurable Sh.  
unnoble Lyly, Sh., Fletcher.  
unnumerable More.  
unperfect Sh. AV.  
unplausible Mi.  
unpossible Lyly, Sh., AV., Goldsm. (vg. 650).  
unproper Sh.  
unsatiable More.  
unsatiate Sh.  
unsufferable Defoe.  
unsufficient More.  
untractable Defoe.

Many of these, and similar *un-* words, are still in use in dialects, see EDD. and Wright Rustic Speech p. 31.

Words, in which *in-* was formerly used, while *un-* is now recognized:

incertain Sh.  
incharitable Sh.  
inchaste Peele.  
infortunate Kyd, Sh.  
ingrateful Sh., Mi.  
insubstantial Sh.

(It is not, of course, pretended that these words occur only in the authors named; in most cases it would be very easy to find examples in other writers as well.)

Both *unfrequent* and *infrequent* are in use, the latter, for instance in Zangw. G. 199 not infrequent. *Unelegant* and *unfirm* are rarer than *inelegant* and *infirm*.

The distinction now made between *human* and *humane* is recent; *inhuman* has the meaning corresponding to *humane*, while the negative of *human* is generally expressed by *non-human*, rarely as in Stevenson MB. 166 he was so unaffectedly *unhuman* that he did not recognise the human intention of that teaching.

Corresponding to *apt* we have the Latin and French *inept* with change of vowel and of meaning ('foolish') and the English formation *unapt*; the corresponding sbs. are *ineptitude* and *unaptness*, rarely as in Shaw Ibsen 10 women...their *inaptitude* for reasoning — evidently with a sly innuendo of the other word.

*Inutterable* was in use in the 17th c. (Mi., etc.), but has been superseded by *unutterable*; it has been revived, however, in one instance by Tennyson, no doubt to avoid two successive words beginning with *un-*: p.383 killed with inutterable unkindliness.

Words beginning with *in-* or *im-* do not admit of the prefix *in-*; hence *un-* even in long and learned words like *unimportant*, *unintelligible*, *unintentional*, *uninterrupted*, etc. *Unimmortal* (Mi. PL. 10.611) is rare. Note also *disingenuous* (e. g. Shelley L. 729).

It is sometimes felt as an inconvenience that the negative prefix is identical in form with the (Lat.) preposition *in*. The verb *inhabit* contains the latter; but *inhabitable* is sometimes used with negative import, thus in Mandv. 161 and Sh. R2. I. 1. 65 Euen to the frozen ridges of the Alpes, Or any other ground inhabitable. The ambiguity of this form leads to the use of two forms with *un-*, a rarer one as in Defoe R. 156 the *uninhabitable* part of the world, (but the form *inhabited*

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is used *ib.* 188 in the positive sence), and the more usual *uninhabitable*, which is found in *Sh. Temp.* II. 1. 37 and has now completely prevailed. The corresponding positive adjective ('what can be *inhabited*') is *habitable*. Ambiguities are also found in other similar adjectives, as seen by definitions in dictionaries: *investigable* (1) that may be investigated, (2) incapable of being investigated; *infusible* (1) that may be infused or poured in, (2) incapable of being fused or melted; *invertible* (1) capable of being inverted, (2) incapable of being changed. *Importable*, which is now used only as derived from *import* (capable of being imported) had formerly also the meaning 'unbearable', and *improvable* similarly had the meaning of 'incapable of being proved', though it only retains that of 'capable of being improved'. *Inexistence* means (1) the condition of existing *in* something, and (2), rarely, the condition of not existing. Cf. *Growth* § 140 for a few more examples.

With regard to the employment and meaning of these two prefixes it is, first, important to note that their proper sphere is with adjectives and adverbs. They are found frequently with sbs., but exclusively with such as are derived from adjectives, e. g. *unkindness*, *injustice*, *unimportance*, *incomprehensibility*. Similarly *unemployment*, which does not mean the same as *non-employment*, but refers to the number of *unemployed*. Cf. also the rare *unproportion*, from *proportionate*, in *Kinglake* E. 178 the wide unproportion between this slender company, and the boundless plain of sand. *Unfriend* (frequent in *Sc.*) also smacks of *unfriendly*: it is found in *Kipling* K. 202 they were unfriends of mine | *Hewlett* Q. 30 not distinguishing friend from unfriend. Carlyle's "Thinkers and *unthinkers*" (*FR.* 107) is a nonce-word.

The negative prefixes *un-* and *in-* are not used with verbs, though *un-* is very frequent with participles, because these are adjectival: *undying*, *unfinished*. (*In-* with Latin parti-

ciples, which in Engl. are simply adjectives: *inefficient*. *imperfect*). On the privative *un-* with verbs see below p. 147.

Not all adjectives admit of having the negative prefix *un-* or *in-*, and it is not always easy to assign a reason why one adjective can take the prefix and another cannot. Still, the same general rule obtains in English as in other languages, that most adjectives with *un-* or *in-* have a depreciatory sense: we have *unworthy*, *undue*, *imperfect*, etc., but it is not possible to form similar adjectives from *wicked*, *foolish*, or *terrible*. Van Ginneken (*Linguistique psychologique* 208) counted the words in *un-* in a German dictionary and found that 98 pct. of the substantives and 85 pct. of the adjectives had "une signification défavorable"; Noreen (*Vårt språk* 5. 567) found similar relations obtaining in Swedish.

The modification in sense brought about by the addition of the prefix is generally that of a simple negative: *unworthy* = 'not worthy', etc. The two terms are thus contradictory terms. But very often the prefix produces a "contrary" term or at any rate what approaches one: *unjust* (and *injustice*) generally imply the opposite of *just* (*justice*); *unwise* means more than *not wise* and approaches *foolish*, *unhappy* is not far from *miserable*, etc. Still, in most cases we have only approximation, and *unbeautiful* (which is not very common, but is used, for instance, by Carlyle R. 1. 118, Swinburne L. 187, Zangwill, and others) is not so strong as *ugly* or *hideous*. Sometimes the use of the negative is restricted: *unwell* refers only to health, and we could not speak of a book as *unwell printed* (for *badly*). *Unfair* is only used in the moral sense, not of outward looks.

While *immoral* means the opposite of *moral*, i. e. what is contrary to (the received ideas of) morality, the necessity is sometimes felt of a term implying 'having nothing to do with morality, standing outside the sphere of morality'; this is some-

times expressed by *amoral* (thus frequently by the late ethnologist A.H. Keane), sometimes by *unmoral*; Stevenson (NED) There is a vast deal in life and letters both, which is not immoral, but simply a-moral | N. P. 1909 children are naturally neither moral nor immoral, but merely unmoral. They are little savages, living in a civilized society that has not yet civilized them | London V. 255 the universe was unmoral and without concern for men. — Cf. from French Rolland J. Chr. 5. 130 Moralité, *immoralité*, *amoralité* — tous ces mots ne veulent rien dire.

As *irreligious* is very often used as the opposite of *religious*, Carlyle in one passage avoids this word, in speaking of University College, London, "it will be *unreligious*, secretly *antireligious* all the same, said Irving to me" (R. 1. 293).

*Infamous* has been separated from *famous* as in sound (cf. p. 139), so in sense: the negative of *famous* is now rather *unfamed*.

Other examples, in which the word with the negative prefix has been separated in sense from the simplex, are

different	indifferent
pertinent	impertinent.

*Invaluable* means 'priceless', 'very valuable' while the negative of *valuable* is *worthless*.

*Un-* (rarely *in-*) may be prefixed to participial groups: *unheard-of*, *uncalled-for*, *uncared-for* | Defoe R. 341 the 872 mouldores, which was *undisposed of*.

To the same category may be referred Bennett W. 2. 235 that the time was out of joint and life *unworth living* | Whitney Or. Studies 1. 286 were a generation of infants to grow up *untaught to speak* || B. Jo. 1. 25 you have very rare, and *un-in-one-breath-utterable* skill.

There is an interesting Sc. way of using the negative prefix *on-* (= *un-*) before participles, as in Alexander, Johnny

Gibb 235 I'm nae responsible to gae afore Sir Simon on-hed my papers upo' me [= without having]. — This is sometimes mistakenly written *ohn*, as if from G. *ohne*: *ohn been ashamed* (EDD.).

Instead of prefixing *un-* to adjectives in *-ful* it is usual to substitute *-less* for *-ful*, thus *careless* corresponding to *careful*, *thoughtless*, *hopeless*, *useless*; but *unfaithful*, *unmerciful* are used by the side of *faithless*, *merciless*; *unlawful* does not mean the same as *lawless*; *uneventful* and *unsuccessful* are preferred to *eventless* and *successless*; *unbeautiful* is used, but there is no *beautiless*.

### Dis-.

The prefix *dis-* (from Lat.) besides various other meanings also has that of a pure negative, as in *dissimilar*, *dishonest*, *dispassionate*, *disagree* (*-able*), *disuse*, *dislike*, *disbelieve* generally implying contrary rather than contradictory opposition, as is seen very distinctly in *dissuade*, *disadvise* (Trollope W. 231 he *disadvised* you from it), *disreputable*, etc. Sometimes the prefix has the same privative meaning as *un-* before verbs (see p. 148), as in *disburden*, *disembarrass*; Carlyle FR. 268 *diswhipped* Taskmaster (nonce-word); *discover* has been specialized and differentiated from *uncover*.

A difference is made between *dis-* and *un-* in Amr. NP. '16 The entrance of a fresh and powerful neutral [U. S.], honestly *disinterested* but not *uninterested* — the former referring to egoism, the latter to more ideal motives. (In Ido the two would be *sen-interesta* *ma ne sen-interesa*).

As with *in-* we have sometimes here a linguistic drawback arising from the ambiguity of the prefix. *Dissociable* may be either the negative of *sociable* (unsociable) or derived from the verb *dissociate* (separable); in the former case the NED will pronounce a double [s], while Mr. Daniel Jones has single [s] in both, but pronounces the ending in the former [-jəbl], in the latter [jəbl] or [jəbl].

*Disannul* means practically the same thing as *annul* and thus contains a redundant negative (cf. Span. *desnudar*).

Non-.

A great many words (sbs., not so often adjs.) are formed with the Latin *non-*, especially in those cases where no formations with *un-* or *in-* are available. Juridical terms are probably responsible for the extent to which this prefix has been made use of. Sh. has *nonage*, *non-payment*, *non-performance*, *non-regardance*, and *non-suit*. It will be seen that *non-* is chiefly used with action-nouns; but it is also frequent with agent-nouns, such as *non-combatant*, *non-belligerent*, *non-communicant*, *non-conductor*, cf. also *non-conducting*, *non-member*. See also Di. N. 50 the *non-arrival* of her own carriage | Wells A. 303 in a *non-natural* way | London V. 199 this tangled, *nonunderstandable* conflict | Macdonald F. 245 their *non-importation* resolutions | ib. 309 the United States was born *non-viable* | a *non-stopping* train.

An-, a-.

The Greek prefix *an-* before a vowel, *a-* before a consonant, etymologically identical with *un-* and *in-* (see p. 139), is chiefly found in Greek words like *anarchy*, *amorphous*, *achromatic*, but is also in rare instances used in English to form new words (from Latin roots), such as *amoral* (above p. 145), *asexual* in Gissing B. 267 the truly emancipated woman is almost asexual.

No-.

*No* (the pronoun) is sometimes used as a kind of prefix: this is illustrated in MEG. II. 16. 79 by examples like *no-education*, *no-thoroughfare*, *no-ball*, etc. Cf. also Carlyle FR. 57 with such *no-faculty* as he has | ib. 199 The Constitution which will suit that? Alas, too clearly, a *No-Constitution*, an Anarchy | Times Lit. Suppl. 6 Jy '17 there can be no settlement which is not a world-settlement. Even the *no-settlement* which a stalemate would involve would be an *unsettlement* of the whole world. (The latter to the following prefix).



The privative *un-*.

OE had the prefix *ond-*, *and-*, which was liable to lose its *d* before a consonant; it corresponds etymologically to Gr. *anti-* and G. *ent-*. In *answer* it is no longer felt as a prefix: and in *dread* the only thing left of the prefix is *d*: OE *ondrædan*, cf. G. *entraten*, was felt as containing the prep. *on*, and when that was subtracted, *drædan* remained (Pogatscher, *Anglia* Beibl. 14. 182).

In other instances the prefix remained living, but the vowel was changed into *u*, probably through influence from the negative prefix, (cf. *unless*, ME. *on lesse* (*that*), where also the negative notion caused confusion with *un-*). Thus the old *onbindan*, *ontiegan* became *unbindan*, *untigan* in Ælfric, mod. *unbind*, *untie*. The two prefixes are now different through stress, the negative words having even and the privative end stress. The privative *un-* serves to make verbs, such as *uncover* 'deprive of cover', *untie* 'loose', *undress* 'take off dress', *undo* 'reverse what has been done, annul, untie', *unmask*, etc., also for instance *unman* 'deprive of the qualities of a man', *unking* 'dethrone' (Sh.), *unlord*.

The following quotations may serve to illustrate the freedom with which new verbs are formed with this prefix: Sh. VA. 908 she treads the path that she *untreads* againe | John III. 1. 245 *Vnsweare* faith sworne | H. 5 IV. 3. 76 thou hast *unwisht* five thousand men | Milton PL. 5. 895 Then who created thee lamenting learne, When who can *uncreate* thee thou shalt know | Dryden 5. 193 [he] wishes, he could *unbeget* these rebel sons | ib. 392 to say or to *unsay*, whate'er you please | Defoe P. 25 they were, as it were, alarmed, and *unalarmed* again | Coleridge, Letter 1800 (Campb. LVIII.) before the end of the year I shall have my wings *unbirdlimed* | Byren 582 do not poison all My peace left, by *unwishing* that thou wert A father | Mrs. Browning A. 170 death quite *unfellow*s us | Carlyle S. 82 it makes and *unmakes* whole worlds | Twain M. 190 [she] *unhandkerchiefs* one eye.

While infinitives and other pure verb-forms beginning with *un-* can only be privatives, participles with the same beginning may be either negatives or privatives, the written and printed forms being identical in the two cases. Thus *uncovered* may be [ʼʌnʼkʌvəd] 'not covered' and [ʌnʼkʌvəd] 'deprived of cover'; *unlocked* [ʼʌnʼlɒkt] 'not locked' and [ʌnʼlɒkt] 'opened'; similarly *untied*, *undressed*, *unstrapped*, *unbuttoned*, *unharnessed*, *unbridled*, *unloaded*, *unpacked*, etc.

In some cases it may be doubtful whether we have one or the other prefix, e. g. (I reckon here also Swinburne's *unlore* and *unknow*, though according to the ordinary rules these should be only privatives): Wells V. 124 those *unsexed* intellectuals | Di. D. 117 all sorts of clothing, made and *unmade* | Darwin L. 1. 333 [an anonymous book] has been by some attributed to me — at which I ought to be much flattered and *unflattered* | Swinburne S.b. S. 83 Love or *unlore* me, *Unknow* me or know, I am that which unloves me and loves.

The two prefixes are brought together neatly in Locke S. 246 If charity covers a multitude of sins, *uncharitableness* has the advantage of *uncovering* them.

Sh. and AV. have the illogical verb *unloose* with confusion of *untie* and *loose(n)*.

From the privative verb *to undress* is formed the sb. *undress* (stress on the first syllable, MEG. 1. 5. 72) meaning 'plain clothes' (not uniform), e. g. Scott A. 1. 298 in military undress.

NB. The rules here given for stress of the two kinds of formations are probably too absolute: as a matter of fact there is a good deal of vacillation. Mr. Daniel Jones, in his *Pronouncing English Dictionary* 1917, does not seem to recognize any distinction between the two prefixes. Most of the unphonetic pronouncing dictionaries give end-stress in all cases.

## ADDENDA

P. 10 (Place of *G. nicht*). Collitz, Das schwache präteritum 67 Denn der Rigveda kennt die lautgruppe *skh-*, die ganz den eindruck einer aus dem prakrit stammenden lautverbindung macht, überhaupt nicht Deutschbein, Syst. d. neuengl. synt. 27 Das frühneuengl. hat die neigung, das object möglichst an das verbum anzuschliessen, noch nicht.

P. 16 (Transition from 'nothing' to 'not'). Cf. on adverbial *none* MEG. II. 16. 69.

P. 39. Carlyle FR. 405 what could he look for there? Exasperated Tickets of Entry answer: Much, all. But cold Reason answers: *Little, almost nothing.*

P. 44 or in some other place combinations like "He regretted that more Englishmen did *not* come here" (NP '17) should have been mentioned.

P. 47. With *not ever* compare the rare *not any* as in Quincey 275 "Had any gentleman heard of a dauphin killed by small-pox?" "No, *not any* gentleman had heard of such a case".

P. 47 f. Times Lit. Suppl. 3 Aug. '17 We have not gagged our Press because we disliked our freedom, but because to this extent the Prussian has triumphed | Madvig Program 1857. 90. Jeg elsker ikke mit sprog, fordi det er eller har været herligt og skjønt ... jeg elsker det, fordi det er mine fædres og mit folks sprog

P. 51 Mason R 104 Sylvia was determined *not to be* disappointed.

P. 60 (Negative continued as if positive). A reference has here unfortunately fallen out to Siesbye, Nord tidsskr. f. filol. 3. r. 8 p. 8 ff. and Dania 10 p. 44.

P. 77. English does not always require *being* after *far from*. she is far from pretty, etc.

P. 81 (*Not* with numerals). Bronte J 4 he punished me; not two or three times in the week, nor once or twice in the day, but continually.

P. 89 (Negative with word of .1-class, result *C*). Here should be mentioned words for 'never' like *G. nummer* and *niv*, OE. *nā*, but then the constituent *ie*, *ā* does not exclusively belong to class .1, but also to some extent to class *B* — The effect of stress and tone in these cases is sometimes analogous to what we have seen with numerals; cf. Dan "han var ikke syg på hele rejsen", which with strong stress and high tone on *hele* may mean 'he was only sick during part of the voyage', but otherwise means 'not at all'. A negative may, of course, be annulled by an indirect negative, as in Rolland JChr. 8. 142 Comment. vous me connaissez? — *Comme si tout le monde ne se connaissait pas à Paris* (= Tout le monde se connaît).

## NEGATION IN ENGLISH AND OTHER LANGUAGES

P. 123. A characteristic illustration of the way in which educated people look upon *don't* in the third person singular is found in the conversation in Jack London's *Martin Eden*, p. 64 f.

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**Abbreviations** of names of authors and books quoted are the same as in my *Modern English Grammar* vol. II. to which I may here refer (Ch. = Chaucer, Sh. = Shakespeare, AV. = Authorized Version of the Bible, Mi. = Milton, Buny. = Bunyan, By. = Byron, Di. = Dickens, GE. = George Eliot, Tenn. = Tennyson, Thack. = Thackeray, Ru. = Ruskin, NP. = newspaper). A few titles of books which are not found in the list there will be given in the third volume of my *Grammar*, if that is ever to appear.

— *Historisk-filologiske Meddeleser*, Vol. 1, No. 5, 1917



## CHAPTERS ON ENGLISH

### PREFACE

WHEN the publishers told me that a reprint of *Progress in Language with Special Reference to English* (1894, second edition—practically without any changes, in 1909) was again called for, I thought it not advisable to issue the book once more in its former shape. It has always been to some extent prejudicial to the book that it was made up of two really distinct treatises: (1) chapters i.-v. and ix., dealing with questions of general philology, the development and origin of language, and (2) chapters vi.-viii., dealing with some special points in the history of English. It is true that the two parts were by no means incompatible, in so far as the general view of linguistic progress had influenced the way in which English grammar was treated in the special chapters, and inversely the results gained in these formed part of the evidence on which

the general conclusions were based. Still, it could not be supposed that everybody interested in the general problems of philology would care equally for subtleties of English grammar, nor, on the other hand, that students of English would like to buy a book, half of which was only loosely connected with his special field of interest. I have therefore thought it best now definitely to separate the two parts, the more so as the time that has elapsed since the first publication of my book has affected them in different ways. While, namely, so much has been written of late years on general linguistics that parts of the book, more particularly perhaps the controversial portions, may now seem a little out of date, the same cannot be said about the English chapters. indeed, I see no inconvenience in reprinting them from the old plates, even though I should now, of course, be able to add much illustrative matter, and though it would be possible now to refer to some new treatises and new editions of standard works. Very little would, however, be gained by such changes, and I have, consequently, refrained

PREFACE, CHAPTERS ON ENGLISH

from any changes except those necessitated by the new numbering of chapters and sections.

The rest of *Progress in Language* I shall try to re-write so as to make it a better and fuller expression of my views on the origin and development of language as they have matured during long years of thought and study.



## CHAPTER I.

### ENGLISH CASE-SYSTEMS, OLD AND MODERN.

1. (103) The arrangement of inflexions current in grammars, according to which all cases of the same noun, all tenses, persons, etc., of the same verb, are grouped together as a paradigm, is not a truly grammatical one: what is common to Old English *dæg—dæge—dæges—dagas—dagum—daga*,—for instance, is not the flexional element, but the word, or stem of the word; the tie between all these forms, accordingly, is not of a grammatical, but of a *lexical* character. That such an arrangement may offer some advantages from a practical point of view cannot, indeed, be denied; but, on the other hand, it causes many things to be wrested from one another which belong together grammatically, *e.g.*, the termination *-um*, which is common to the dative plural of all the flexional classes. Besides, it forces us to separate from one another the two parts of grammar which treat respectively of the forms of words and of their uses. In the latter, we must needs deal with (say) all datives under one head, all genitives under another, and so forth, while in accordance these forms

are distributed according to declension classes. Such a disjunction, however, of accident and syntax, beyond what is strictly necessary, is doubtless injurious to the right understanding of grammar. At any rate, this *paradigmatic* arrangement of grammatical phenomena will not answer the purposes of this chapter, where we seek to get as perspicuous a survey as possible of the grammatical forms of two distinct stages of one and the same language.

2. (104) Many works of comparative philology, however, employ another arrangement. In this each case is dealt with more by itself, so that either (as in Schleicher's *Compendium*) the accusative singular, for example, is treated separately in each language, or (as in Brugmann's *Grundriss*) the mode of formation of one definite case in one definite class of nouns (*i*-stems, etc.) is followed out through all the allied tongues. According to this arrangement all those facts are brought into a single class which are related to one another from the point of view of a student of comparative philology; but, as an inevitable consequence, the survey of the forms of any one language (or stage of language) is obscured; the unity of time and place is effaced; and, moreover, we get only a formal conception of the phenomena. The morphological element has been brought to the front at the expense of the syntactical, which has to be treated in another section, so that the constant reciprocal action of form and function is generally lost sight of.

3. (105) Lastly, we come to what I will term the *purely grammatical* arrangement. The grammar of a language is, as it were, an answer to the question, What general means of expression does such and such a language possess?<sup>1</sup> Now, by the purely grammatical arrangement the methods of expression existing in a particular language at a particular time are tabulated in such a manner that those forms come together which are grammatically analogous. By this arrangement, forms which belong together from a dictionary point of view, *e.g.*, *dæg*, *dæge*, are wrested from one another, and the same may be the case with forms which belong together historically, *e.g.*, Old English nominative plural neuter *hof-u* and *word*; it is true that they were once formed with the same ending, but an Englishman of King Alfred's time could not possibly be aware of this point of agreement. Clearly by this mode of treatment the individual element, by which I mean that which is peculiar to each language or to each successive stage of language, is brought more distinctly into view; we are, moreover, enabled to survey the potentialities of development of each particular language: we see plainly where the differences between the various cases are so well marked that they can easily be kept distinct, and where they bear such a close resemblance to each other in form or function, or in both alike, as to run the risk of being levelled and blended.

In an ideal language it would be an easy matter to

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Sweet, *Words, Logic and Grammar*, p. 31.

carry out such an arrangement: since each modification of meaning would have its own expression, which would be constant for all cases and quite unambiguous, a separation of accident and syntax would be precluded, *ipso facto*; whether we should say, the genitival relation is expressed by -a, or -a denotes the genitive, would be quite immaterial.

4. (106) Not so in the idioms actually existing or recorded with their countless freaks of chance and capricious exceptions. In Latin, for example, -i sometimes denotes the genitive singular, sometimes the nominative plural, and if, conversely, we ask how the genitive singular is formed, the answer will be: now by -i, now by -is, etc. Consequently, we get two different modes of arrangement, according as we take as our base

I. Analogies of form (such and such a termination expresses such and such a meaning)—the *morphological* classification,—

or,

II. Resemblances of function (such and such a relation is signified by such and such terminations)—the *syntactical* classification.

The two arrangements stand to one another as the two parts of a dictionary, in one of which the form (say, some German or French vocable) is given, and the signification sought (in other words, the English equivalent is appended): in the other, the meaning is the known quantity, and the appended part is the German or French term which was required to be known.

5. (107) Before attempting to give a synopsis, arranged upon these principles, of English case-systems at different epochs of the growth of the language, I have to premise with regard to *Old English* that, as a matter of course, I shall have to give, in the main, West-Saxon forms, though for a thorough understanding of the historical process of development of Standard English it would have been better if I had been in a position to avail myself of a Mercian, or, still better, a London grammar representing the language as spoken about the year 800. Again, in stating the function, I shall have to be very brief, and content myself with merely giving names, leaving it to the reader to understand by "dative" (for example)—not the notion of dative in itself, for such a notion has no existence, but—"Old English dative". For the particular use which English people of a thousand years ago made of their dative case, I must refer to the Old English syntax, which is, unfortunately, still to be written. In the present chapter I can give nothing but a skeleton-like scheme, which does not aim at completeness.

6. (108) It will not fail to meet with general approval that, in drawing up this scheme, I have followed SIEVERS'S excellent *Angelsächsische Grammatik* (2 Aufl., 1886). In accordance with my general views, however, as stated above, I shall differ from Sievers in paying much more regard than he does to what would naturally appear to King Alfred and his contemporaries as the significant element in

language: I shall have to separate word and case-ending, as far as this is feasible, in the same manner as the instinctive linguistic sense of that time would have done, regardless of the prehistoric condition of things. Old English *eage*, for instance, is historically, it is true, an *n*-stem; but for my present purposes I shall have to look upon it as consisting of *eag* + the nominative ending *-e*, the genitive being *eag + an*, and so on. We want a special term for this distinction; and I propose to call the substantial part of the word, felt as such by the instinct of each generation as something apart from the ending (*eag* in the example chosen), the *kernel* of the word, while *eagan* is the historic "stem". No doubt, in some cases it will depend on a more or less arbitrary choice, how much of the traditional form is to be treated as kernel and how much as ending. For instance, *eage* itself might be said to be the kernel, the genitive ending being *-n*, before which the *e* of the kernel is changed into *a*. This division would, however, seem to be unnatural for Old English; although so much must be granted, that in Middle English we must look upon *eie* (not *ei*) as the kernel, to which the ending *-n* is affixed in the nominative plural.<sup>1</sup>

The fact is, that along with the perpetual wearing away of words there is often an alteration in the feeling as to the relations of kernel and ending.

<sup>1</sup> In Old English *here* the kernel is *here*, but in *wine* it is *win*; cf. dative plural *herj-um* (written *hereum*, *herigum*, etc.), but *win-um*.

Now a little more, now a little less may be included in one or the other, exactly as when one generation considers the sound-combination *anaddere* as consisting of *a* + *naddere*, whilst the next looks upon it as *an* + *addere* (Modern English, *an adder*), or when *mine uncle* is transmuted into *my nuncle*.

7. (109) It will be seen that if Old English *eage* is said to be an *n*-stem, what is meant is this, that at some former period the kernel of the word ended in *-n*, while, as far as the Old English language proper is concerned, all that is implied is that the word is inflected in a certain manner. If, therefore, in the following pages, I shall speak of *n*-stems, *i*-stems, etc., it is only as designations for classes of declension. It follows, however, from my view that we are not properly entitled to put down, *e.g.*, *wyrm* as an *i*-stem, for by doing so we should fail to give a true picture of the real condition of things in the Old English period. If a modern linguist is able to see by the vowel-mutation (umlaut) that *wyrm* was an *i*-stem, an Englishman of that time could not have suspected any such thing, as the endings of the several cases of *wyrm* are identical with those of (the *o*-stems, *e.g.*) *dom*. When Sievers reckons *wyrm* among *i*-stems, or gives *sige* as an *es- os*-stem, he is writing for the benefit of those who take only a secondary interest in Old English grammar, and care chiefly for the way in which it reflects prehistoric phenomena. He is thinking little of those other students who make the first object of their investiga-

tion the mutual relations of the facts of a language at a definite historical epoch, and who go to the study of Old English partly for the sake of seeing the mechanism of this particular idiom as an organically connected whole, partly with a view to seeking in it the explanation of later developments of the English language.

**8. (110)** In the succeeding tabulations the following abbreviations are used:—

<b>n</b>	= nominative
<b>a</b>	= accusative
<b>d</b>	= dative
<b>i</b>	= instrumental
<b>g</b>	= genitive
<b>s</b>	= singular
<b>p</b>	= plural
<b>m</b>	= masculine
<b>f</b>	= feminine
<b>nt (or n)</b>	= neuter
<b>b</b>	= words with original short ( <i>brief</i> ) syllable
<b>l</b>	= words with original long syllable (long vowel or short vowel followed by long consonant)
<b>st</b>	= strong adjectival (pronominal) declension
<b>w</b>	= weak adjectival declension <sup>1</sup>
<b>r</b>	= rare

<sup>1</sup> The declension of adjectives and pronouns is only mentioned when deviating from that of nouns.



## CHAPTERS ON ENGLISH

E	= early (Alfred inclusive)
L	= late
WS	= special West Saxon
N	= North of England
S	= Sievers's <i>Grammatik</i> .

Italicised letters indicate the stem (class of declension) :—*o* (words like *dom*, *hof*, *word*; by others termed *a*-stems), *i*, etc.; *c*=those consonantal stems which do not form part of some larger group, such as *u*, *r*. What is said about the *â*-class applies likewise to the *wâ*-stems with a long vowel or a diphthong preceding the *w* (S, § 259), so that, in mentioning *wâ*, I only mean those in which the *w* is preceded by a consonant (S, § 260); the *jâ*-stems are only referred to when they present deviations from the other *â*-stems (g p); *abstr.*=words like *strengu* (S, § 279). n a p n o b must be read: nominative and accusative plural of neutral *o*-stems consisting of an originally short syllable.

### I. MORPHOLOGICAL CLASSIFICATION.

9. (111) The Old English language used the following formal means to denote case-relations:—

#### A. THE KERNEL OF THE WORD UNCHANGED.

(1) n a s. *o*, *jō* (except 1m), *wo*, *i* (1)f, *u* 1mf, *r*, *nd*, *c* mn, *c* lf [dom hof word, here secg cyn(n) rice westen, bearu searu (beadu), ben, feld hond, fæder modor, freond, fot scrud, boc].—Also N *i* b [wlit, S, § 263, anm. 5].

(2) n s f. (not a s.) *ð* l, *jð* (*wð*) [ar, sib(b) gierd (beadu)]; L also *i* (l)f [ben], -e being used in a s.

(3) d s. some *o* [(æt) ham, (to) dæg and a few more, S, § 237, anm. 2], of *r* only fæder sweostor; r. *u* lf [hond] and *s* [dogor S, § 289]; L *c* lf [ac, etc., S, § 284, anm. 2].

(4) g s. *r*<sup>1</sup> [fæder broðor, etc.]; r. L *u* lf [hond].

(5) n a p. *o* ln, *jō* bn, *wo*, *c* n [word, cyn(n), searu, scrud]; also, though not exclusively, some *r* [broðor dohtor<sup>2</sup> sweostor], *nd* [freond hettend], *c* m [hæleð monað], *s* n [lamb for lambru by a complete transition to the *o*-class].

## B. VOCALIC ENDINGS.

### 10. (112) —a.

(1) n s m. *n* [guma; N also f]; L *u* b [suna].

(2) a s m. L *u* b [suna].

(3) d s. *u* [suna<sup>3</sup> felda<sup>4</sup> dura<sup>3</sup> honda<sup>5</sup>], also often words in -*ung* [leornunga, S, § 255]; also mæda, S, § 260.

(4) g s. *u* bm, f [suna,<sup>6</sup> dura honda; r. lm felda<sup>6</sup>].

(5) n a p. *u* bm [suna],<sup>7</sup> f [dura<sup>3</sup> honda]; r. *u* lm [only hearga<sup>7</sup> appla<sup>7</sup>]. — *i* lm r. [leoda]. — *ð* [giefa<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> L also -es, which appears perhaps first in compounds (heahfæderes, Sweet, *A. S. Reader*, 14 b, 136).

<sup>2</sup> *Oros.*, 126, 7, Laud MS., his 11 dohtor, Cott. MS., his twa dohtora.

<sup>3</sup> L superseded by -n.

<sup>4</sup> L superseded by -e.

<sup>5</sup> L superseded by—(the kernel without any addition).

<sup>6</sup> L superseded by— -es.

<sup>7</sup> L superseded by -u -as (-an).

ara<sup>1</sup>], also instead of *-e* in *i* lf and *abstr.* [bena, strenga].—And finally L *o* bn [hofa, S, § 237, anm. 5].

(6) g p. wherever the ending is not *-ana*, *-ena*, *-ra*, see below [doma<sup>2</sup> hofa<sup>2</sup> worda,<sup>2</sup> her(i)g(e)a secg(e)a enda cynna ric(e)a westenna, bearwa searwa, gief<sup>2</sup> ara,<sup>2</sup> sibba gierda, beadwa mædwa, win(ige)a spera, bena, suna felda dura honda (strenga?), fota scruda hnuta boca fæd(e)ra freonda]; r. *n* [bæcitra, S, § 276, anm. 1]. *-a* is also found in g p. in neutral adjectives when used as substantives [goda], *Cosijn Altw. Gr.*, ii., § 49.

## II. (113) —*e*.

(On *i* for classical O. E. *e*, see S, §§ 132 f, 237 anm. 2, 246 anm. 1, 252 anm. 1, 263 anm. 1, 269 anm. 2.)

(1) n a s. *jō* lm [ende], *i* bmn [wine spere] bf [only dene<sup>3</sup>], *jā* r. [-nisse -nyse, generally -nes], *n* nt [eage].

(2) n s. *n* f [tunge<sup>3</sup>]; N also r. m.

(3) a s. *ð* [gief<sup>2</sup> are]; *abstr.* [streng<sup>2</sup>]; L also *i* lf [bene<sup>4</sup>].

(4) d (i) s. (on the difference between the older instr. in *-i* (*-y*) and the dative in *-æ*, see Sievers, *P. B.*

<sup>1</sup> L superseded by *-e*.

<sup>2</sup> N and L also (*-ana*), *-ena*, sometimes also *-na* [larna].

<sup>3</sup> L superseded by *-n*.

<sup>4</sup> The same difference between E and L as in *i* lf seems to hold with *wā* l; cf. *Orosius*, the older MS. (Laud, Sweet's ed., 92, 15), gelice and mon *mæd* mawe, the younger (Cott., Bosworth's ed., 51, 23), gelice and mon *mæde* mawe. Platt, *Anglia*, vi., 177, knows only the acc. *mæde*.

*Beitr.*, viii., 324 f.; in classical O. E., this distinction is no more found)—everywhere except *u* and *n* and the rest of consonantic stems, where, however, *-e* begins to crop up (S, §§ 273 anm. 2, 274 anm. 1, 280 anm. 2, 281, 286). Accordingly *-e* is found, *e.g.*, in [dome hofe worde, her(i)ge secge ende cynne rice westenne, bearwe searwe, giefē are, sibbe gierde, headwe mæd(w)e, wine spere, bene, strenge; felde for older felda, r. dure nose flore eage fote freonde].—Also neutr. adj. used as substantives [gode], *Cosijn*, ii., § 49.

(5) *i* s. distinct from *d* s. only in some pronouns and *st* adj. [micle]; it occurs comparatively seldom, see *Cosijn*, ii., §§ 38-48.

(6) *g* s. *ā* [giefē are], *i* lf [bene], *abstr.* [strenge], *c* bf [hnute] lf [burge boce, etc., used concurrently with mutated forms; ace muse and others without mutation, S, § 284, anm. 1]; *r.* *u* f [dure S, § 274, anm. 1].

(7) *n* a p. *i* bm [wine<sup>1</sup> -ware], *lm* a few words [Engle], lf [bene<sup>2</sup>], thence also *ā* [giefē are]; *st* m(f) [gode], also *nd* polysyllabics [hettende, besides -nd, -ndas].

(8) Mutated *d* s. og *n* a p. *c* bf [hnyte].

## 12. (114) —*u*.

(On *-o* see S, §§ 134 f, 237 anm. 4 and 5, 249, 252, 269 anm. 2 and 5, 279.)

(1) *n* s. *u* b [sunu duru]; *ā* b [giefu], *abstr.* [strengu], *c* bf [hnutu].

<sup>1</sup> Superseded by *-as*.

<sup>2</sup> Also *-a*.

(2) a s. *u* b [sunu duru] ; L *á* b and *abstr.*, S, §§ 253 anm. 2, 279.

(3) d s. *u* b [sunu duru ; generally -a], *á* b and *abstr.* as in (2).

(4) g s. L *á* b and *abstr.* as in (2).

(5) n a p n. *o* b [hofu ; L also l : wordu, see on polysyllabics, S, § 243], *jō* l [ric(i)u] and polysyllab. [westen(n)u], (*wo* : *u* for -*wu*, searu), *i* b [speru], similarly *st* b which have however often -e from m [hwatu].

n a p m f *u* b L [sunu duru] ; *r* [broðru dohtru, which form also other plurals].

(6) (i s. horu Elene 297 from horh.)

#### C. NASAL ENDINGS.

##### 13. (115) —*um*.

(1) d s. *st*. [þiosum, godum]. —? miolcum, heaf-dum, see Kluge, *Pauls Grundr.*, i., 386.

(2) d p. everywhere [domum hofum wordum, her(i)gum secg(i)um endum cynnum ric(i)um westen-num bearwum searwum, giefum arum, sibbum gierdum, nearwum, winum sperum Englum, benum, sunum feldum durum hondum, gumum<sup>1</sup> tungum eagum, strengum, fotum hnutum bocum, fæd(e)rum, freon-dum, lombrum L lambum].

On -an, -on for -um see § 14.

—*m*.

(1) d s. pron. [him ðæm hwæm].

(2) d p. in some words after a vowel, for -um

<sup>1</sup> R -num : oxnum, nefenum, S, § 277, anm. 1.

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[cneom beside cneowum, S, § 250, nr. 2 ; fream, etc., S, § 277, anm. 2], numerals [twæm þrim].

### 14. (116) —an (—on).

(1) d g s. and n a p. *n* [guman tungan eagan].

(2) a s. *n* m. and f. [guman tungan].

(3) n s. L weak adj.

(4) for *-um* L.

(5) g p. r. L [eastran, S, § 276, anm. 1 ; weak adj. § 304, anm. 2].

### —n

for *-an* in some words after a vowel [frean, etc., S, § 277, anm. 2 ; beon tan, S, § 278, anm. 2].

### 15. (117) —ena [N ana].

g p *n* [gumena tungena eagna] ; L also in *o* and *æ*, especially b [carena, S, § 252, anm. 4], not *jæ*.

### —na.

g p in a few words [sceona, etc., S, § 242, anm. 2. N treona, § 250, nr. 2 ; Seaxna, etc., § 264 ; *n* l after r and g : larna eagna, § 276, anm. 1, oxna, § 277, anm. 1, gefana Sweona, § 277, anm. 2].

### 16. (118) —ne.

a s m. pron. [hi(e)ne þone þi(o)sne hwone] and *st* [godne].

## D. ENDINGS CONTAINING S.

### 17. (119) —as.

n p m. *o* [domas], *jō* [her(i)g(e)as endas], *wo* [bearwas], *u* l [feldas], *r* only fæderas ; becomes more-over frequent in *i* [winas], *u* b [sunas], *na* [also -ras : wealdendras, S, § 286, anm. 2].

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(G s. in -as r.; perhaps Beowulf, 63, 2453, 2921.)

### 18. (120) —*es*.

(1) g s m n. *o* [domes hofes wordes], *jo* [her(i)ges secges endes rices westennes], *wo* [bearwes searwes], *u l* [feldes], *nd* [freondes hettendes], *c m* [fotes]; -es becomes frequent in *u b* [sunes], *n* [eages eares], *r* [fæderes]; N also in most other stems.

(2) n a p. for -as L, S, § 237, anm. 3.

—*s*.

g s. very rare : eas (*Oros.*, 17, 23; *Chron.*, 896, 918, 919, 922) cus, S, 284, anm. 4, sæs, S, § 266, anm. 3 (also n a p).

## E. OTHER ENDINGS.

### 19. (121) —*ra*.

g p. p r o n. [hiera (heora) þara], *st.* [godra], *nd* polysyll. [hettendra];<sup>1</sup> = r + a : s n [lombra cealfra, etc.; cildra also in texts which in n p have cild].

—*re*.

g d s f p r o n. [þære þisre], *st.* [godre].

—*or*, —*ru*.

n a p n s [lomber, see Schmidt, *Pluralb.*, 149, lombru<sup>2</sup>].

—*rum*.

d p n s in the same words as -ru.

—*ð*

might be considered a case-ending in hæleð, monað, ealoð, dg s, n a p; but the words are generally inflected regularly.

<sup>1</sup> Also the numerals tweg(r)a þreora.

<sup>2</sup> Superseded by —, (-as).

F. CHANGES IN THE KERNEL.

**20. (122) *I-mutation***

is the only one of these changes which becomes a case-sign, namely in

(1) d s. *c* [fet<sup>1</sup> tēþ men(n), bec<sup>1</sup> byr(i)g, ie,<sup>1</sup> etc.],  
*r* [breðer meder dehter], *nd* [friend<sup>1</sup>].

(2) g s. *c* lf [bec,<sup>2</sup> etc., ie<sup>2</sup>], *r* r. f [meder dehter].

(3) n a p. *c* [fet tēþ men(n), bec ges byr(i)g], *nd*  
 [friend<sup>3</sup>].

G. A TOTALLY DIFFERENT KERNEL.

Frequent in *pron.* [ic—me—wit—unc—us, etc.;  
 se—þone, etc.].

**21. (123)** Those were the means used in Old English to denote case-relations; but we have not in our lists mentioned all the changes undergone by Old English words, for alongside of these significative changes we find a great many others which do not play any part in distinguishing cases. I shall briefly indicate the most important of these incidental changes.

(1) *I-mutation*, in isolated cases of i s. *o* [hwene, æne, S, § 237, anm. 2], in d s. *c* bf [hnyte] and r. *u* [dyre]. Where the *i-mutation* is found through all cases as in *cynn*, it does not concern us here.

<sup>1</sup> Unmutated forms are also used: fote boc, etc.; as for ea, note, e.g., *Oros.*, L. 14.28, from þære ie = C. 18.21, from þære ea; L. 174.3, neah anre ie = C. 84.32, neah anre ea.

<sup>2</sup> Also unmutated forms: boce etc.; cf. *Oros.*, L. 16.6 ie = C. 18.36 ea.

<sup>3</sup> Also unmutated freond.



(2) U-mutation, *o n a d p n* [gebeodu from gebed ; it disappears at an early period, leaving perhaps but one trace, in the differentiation of *cliff* and *cleave*, see Murray's *Dict.* and my *Studier over Engelske Kasus*, § 198] ; other instances of u-mutation, see S, §§ 241, 253, anm. 1, *Cosijn*, ii., p. 3 (cneoht) ; comp. also *cucu*, *cwices*, Sievers, *P. B. Beitr.*, ix., 259.

(3) Interchange of *æ* and *a*, found with greatest phonetic regularity in st. adj. [hwæt, hwates hwate], while in the nouns (of the *o*-class) *æ* is carried through in the singular and *a* in the plural [dæg, dæges—dagas]. After a palatal consonant we have the peculiar change seen in *geat*, *gatu*, which is by-and-by levelled out in different ways. Note also *gærs*, *grasu*. For the still more complicated change in *magu mæcge(s)*, plural *mæcga(s)* *magum*, see Kluge, *Literaturblatt f. germ. u. rom. Philol.*, 1889, 134, and Paul's *Grundriss*, i., 368.

(4) Interchange of long *æ* and long *a*: *mæg*, *magas* ; in *ān ænne*, long *a* and short *æ* interchange.

(5) Interchange of single and double consonant : *cyn*, *cynnes*, S, § 231 ; in the nominative *cynn* is also found, and it is not easy to see if the difference is only a graphical one or indicates a real difference in pronunciation. There is a tendency to utilise the difference for sense-distinguishing purposes in *mann*, "man," and *man*, corresponding to French *homme—on*, or still more closely to Danish *mand*, *man*, see *Cosijn*, ii., p. 47.

(6) Interchange between final voiceless and medial-

voiced consonants : wulf, wulves (written wulfes), hus, huze (written huse), bæp baðas ; see my *Studier over Engelske Kasus*, § 193 ff.

(7) The related interchange between *h* and *g*: beah, beages ; *h* also interchanges with *w*: horh, horwes, the adj. ruh, ruwes (old "grammatical change," determined by Verner's law), and finally there is often an interchange between *h*-forms and forms with no consonant, but with contractions and perhaps lengthening of the vowel : furh, furum (? fūrum), sc(e)oh, sc(e)os, feoh, dative, feo. Here we very often see levellings, the *h*-less form being as a rule generalised.

(8) Interchange between forms with and forms without *w*: treo, treowes, later on levelled both ways : treo, treos ; treow, treowes ; compare also sna(w), S, §§ 174, nr. 3, 250, anm. 1. The forms are differentiated in æ "law" and æw "marriage," S, § 269, anm. 3.

(9) Interchange between *e* or *i*, *u* or *o* and the corresponding vowel-like consonants *j* and *w*: here, herias, herigas, hergeas, herigeas ; bearu, bearwas (L bearuw, bearuwas).

(10) Interchange between the advanced and palatalised open *g* in dæg and the back open *g* in dagas ;<sup>1</sup> so also byrig, burgum. In the latter word

<sup>1</sup> The two consonants corresponded probably to the Danish sounds of *tiger* and *bage* respectively ; see my description in *Articulations of Speech Sounds* (Marburg, 1889), § 106, and in *Dania* (Copenhagen, 1890), vol. i., p. 52, nr. 50, and p. 53, nr. 56.

we have four sound changes: (*a*) the vowel of the principal syllable; (*b*) the vowel of the svarabhakti-syllable, which is also often left out; (*c*) the voiceless and voiced consonants, see above sub 6 and 7; (*d*) the palatalised and unpalatalised consonants.

(11) Vowel change in unstressed syllables, due to an old gradation (ablaut): -ung, ingum (S, § 255, anm. 1; see however *Cosijn*, ii., pp. 21, 22); broðor, breðer; morgen, mergen; see, for instance, *Oros.*, I., 194, 12, on mergen = C. 92, 40, on morgen.<sup>1</sup>

(12) Interchange between a full vowel in final syllables and a weakened one in the middle of the word: rodor, roderas, S, § 129.

(13) Interchange between preserved and omitted weak vowel: engel, engles; deofel, deofles; see especially S, § 144. At a later period this leads sometimes to a differentiation of consonants, pointed out for *engel* by Napier, see the *Academy*, March 15, 1890, p. 188.

(14) Interchanging vowel quantity is probable before many consonant groups; an indubitable case in point is cild, cildru.

**22.** (124) A comparison of Old English with Proto-Arian will show that a good many case-endings have been given up, and that similarly the change of accent and that of vowels (by gradation) have disappeared from the declension; nor does the Germanic interchange of consonants according to Verner's law play

<sup>1</sup> With regard to *mergen* see, however, Sievers, in *P. B. Beitr.*, vii, p. 331, against Paul, *ibid*, vi., 242.

any part in the declension (compare, however, § 21, 7 and 11).<sup>1</sup> Wherever the Old English language shows traces of these phonetic changes, it is always so that one form has been carried through in all cases, so that the other is only shown by the corresponding word in other connected languages, or by other derivatives from the same root. See on these traces especially Joh. Schmidt in Kuhn's *Zeitschrift*, xxvi., p. 8 ff., and *Pluralbildungen der idg. Neutra*, *passim*; Kluge in Kuhn's *Zeitschr.*, xxvi., p. 92 ff.; and in Paul's *Grundriss*, i., p. 387 f.

**23. (125)** It is of greater importance to our subject to examine the extent in which cases which were distinguished either at an earlier stage of the language or in other Old English words, have coalesced in one and the same word. Such *coalescence of cases* is found very frequently, though sometimes the form which is identical with that used in another case is not the only one in use for that particular case.

(1) a s. = n s. in all words except (a) *ā* [giefu ar, accusative giefe are]; from this class the distinction is transferred to *i* l [ben, bene, instead of the older ben, ben], while on the other hand the late O. E. levelling, by which for instance *lufu* comes to be used through the whole of the singular, obliterates the distinction. (b) *n* mf [guma tunge, accusative guman tungan]. (c) *pron.* and *st.* mf.

(2) d s. = n a s. : (a) in some *o*-stems in certain connexions [ham, etc., see § 9, 3], also *treo* and

<sup>1</sup> Compare also *studu*, *stupu*; see Sievers, *P. B. Beitr.*, ix., 249.

similar words. (*b*) *jō* l [ende rice]. (*c*) *i* mnb [wine spere]. (*d*) *u* b [suna and sunu; duru]. (*e*) *fæder* sweostor; also L *r* ac boc, etc.

(3) d s. = a s. besides the words mentioned under (2): *n* mf [guman tungan].

(4) instr. = dative everywhere except in some *pron.* and *st.* mn., even there not strictly distinguished.

(5) g s. = n s.: *r* [fæder broðor, etc.], *r* *u* bm [suna].

(6) g s. = a s.: *ā*, *jā*, *wā* [giefē are sibbe gierde beadwe mæd(w)e], *n* mf [guman tungan], *r* [fæder, etc.]; L *i* lf [bene], *u* bm [suna].

(7) g s. = d s.: *ā*, *jā*, *wā*; *i* lf [bene], *u* [suna dura honda, r. felda], *n* mfn [guman tungan eagan], *c* lf [bec, etc.], *r* [only fæder sweostor], *pron.* f [hiere þære þisse þisre], *st.* [godre].

(8) n p. = n s.: *o* ln [word], *jō* bn [cynn], *wō* n [searu], *i* bm [wine], *u* bm [suna and sunu], *u* bf [duru], *r*: broðor dohtor sweostor, *nd* [freond hettend].

(9) n p. = a s. besides those under (8): *n* mf [guman tungan], L also *ā* [giefē, are], *jā* [sibbe gierde], *wā* [beadwe mæd(w)e], *i* lf [bene].

(10) n p. = d s.: *i* bm [wine], *i* lf [bene], *u* [suna and sunu, felda dura honda], *n* [guman tungan eagan], *c* [fet hnyte bec], *r*: sweostor, *nd* [friend hettende]; also L the f mentioned in the end of (9).

(11) n p. = instr. s.: *st.* m [gode].

(12) n p. = g s.: *u* [suna felda dura honda], *n* [guman tungan eagan], *c* lf [bec], *r*: broðor dohtor sweostor; L the same words as in (9) and (10); finally L m when -es came to be used for -as.

(13) a p. = n p., so that the numbers (8-12) apply also to a p.; the only exceptions are: we—us(ic), ge—eow(ic).

(14) d p. = d s.: pron. [þæm þi(o)sum], *st.* [godum], also weak adj. [godan], S, § 304, anm. 3.

(15) g p. = n a s.: *u* bm L [suna].

(16) g p. = d s.: *u* [suna felda dura honda].

(17) g p. = g s.: *u* [suna felda dura honda].

(18) g p. = n a p. *ā* [giefra ara], *jā* [sibba gierda], *wā* [beadwa mæd(w)a], *i* lf [bena], *u* [suna felda dura honda], *r*: dohtra.

**24.** (126) This list, which does not include indeclinabilia like *strengu*, shows that the chances of mistakes were pretty numerous in Old English declensions. Take the form *suna*; it may be any case, except only dative plural; *sunu* is everything except genitive (singular and plural) and dative plural; *dura* is everything except nominative, accusative singular and dative plural; *fæder* may be any case in the singular; so also *sweostor*, which may moreover be nominative or accusative plural; the only thing we can affirm on such forms as *guman* or *tungan* is that they are neither nominative singular, dative plural, nor genitive plural, and in a late text we cannot even be sure of that, and so on.

## II SYNTACTICAL CLASSIFICATION.

**25.** (127) In the following survey of the manners in which the syntactic categories are expressed in Old English, I have not found it necessary to indicate

in each case which stems had each ending, as I should then have had to repeat much of what has been said above. A dash denotes the unchanged kernel ; -a denotes the kernel with an *a* added to it ; + means the mutated, or otherwise changed kernel ; the most frequent forms or endings are printed in black type, the rare forms or endings are put in ().

*Nom. sg.* — ; -a, -e, -u, (-an).

*pl.* -as, —, -an, -a, -e, -u, +, (-ru, -es), (-n, +e).

*Acc. sg.* —, -e, -u, -an, -ne, (-a, -n).

*pl.* -as, —, -an, -a, -e, -u, +, (-ru, -es), (-n, +e).

*Dat. (instr.) sg.* -ø, -an, -re, +, —, -um, (-m, -a, -u, -n, -a), (+ e).

*pl.* -um, (-an, -m, -n, -rum).

*Gen. sg.* -es, -an, -e, -re, +, (-a, -n), (—, -s, -u).

*pl.* -a, -ena [-ana], -ra, (-na), (-an).

**26.** (128) The Old English language has no expressions for the following syntactic categories, which were found in the Arian parent speech : (1) the dual number ; the only exceptions are *wit*, *unc(it)*, *uncer* and *git*, *inc(it)*, *incer* ; the nouns *duru*, *nosu*, and *breost*, in which traces of the old dual have been found by comparative philologists, were no doubt during the whole of the Old English period, and perhaps even much earlier, felt as singulars, and *sculdru* as a plural ; (2) the vocative case, unless one feels inclined to consider the use of the definite form of the adjective in *leofa freond*, etc., as a sort of vocative.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Rask, *Det Gamle Nordiske Sprogs Oprindelse*, p. 215.

Finally, three or four cases have coalesced to form the Old English dative, the old instrumental being, however, in some words distinct from the dative.

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**27. (129)** I now pass to a similar survey of the case-relations and their expression in MODERN ENGLISH, and must at once declare that I shall deal only with the really spoken language, taking no account of what belongs only to the written language, *e.g.*, the distinctions made between

gen. sg. <i>king's</i>	nom. pl. <i>kings</i>	gen. pl. <i>kings'</i>
<i>lady's</i>	<i>ladies</i>	<i>ladies'</i>

The three forms sound alike, and the systematic difference now made between them is quite recent. Before the middle of the eighteenth century they were all of them written alike; thus we find for instance in the original editions of Shakespeare, *Kings*, *ladies*, for the three cases. The apostrophe was at that time used (without any regard to case-function) where a syllable was added in pronunciation (*Thomas's*), or where the spelling *-es* was still commonly used, the apostrophe being then used to indicate that no new syllable was to be pronounced (compare the modern spelling *stab'b'd*); in Shakespeare you will find, *e.g.*, *earth's* as a genitive singular and *prey's* as a nominative plural. Sometimes the apostrophe is even in our days used before the plural ending; thus in Shake-

Rask's identification of the ending *-e* in Danish *gode gud* with the Latin and Greek vocative ending is, of course, wrong, but that does not make his syntactical observation less correct.



speare's *Twelfth Night* (ii., 5, 96) the spelling "her very *C's*, her *U's*, and her *T's*" is kept unchanged in modern editions; and the same manner of spelling may be found also in proper names, especially when they are not familiar to English readers (*Hrolf's*, in Carlyle, *Heroes*, 29); similarly in *fly's* (carriages) as opposed to the more familiar *flies*; compare also the *Spectator*, No. 80, where Steele speaks of the manner in which people use "their *who's* and their *whiches*".<sup>1</sup> Conversely the apostrophe is not written before every *s* denoting the genitive: *whose*, *its*, *hers*, *yours* being the received spelling, while it is true that some people write *her's* and *your's*.

In dealing with the forms of the spoken language I shall, however, for convenience' sake give them in their usual spelling, though it would, of course, have been more consistent had I written all my examples phonetically. The abbreviations will be the same as in the Old English section, as far as they are needed; "a." means the modern accusative, dative, or common oblique case (*him*, etc.); "abs." stands for the absolute form of the possessive pronouns (*mine*, etc.).

## I. MORPHOLOGICAL CLASSIFICATION.

### 28. (130) A. The kernel of the word unchanged.

(1) n.a.s. in all words; as exceptions might be mentioned those few pronouns which have separate forms for the accusative (*me*, *us*, *him*, *her*, *them*).

<sup>1</sup> Cf. also Alford, *The Queen's English*, p. 12.

(2) n a p. (a) *you*. (b) *sheep* and *deer*.<sup>1</sup> (c) the ordinary compounds of *-man*, *gentleman* and *gentlemen* being pronounced alike ; so *postmen*, *policemen*, etc. (d) some words ending in *-s* [z]: *e.g.*, *means*, *species*. (e) many words are unchanged in the plural in special connexions, especially after numerals and collectively : six *pair* of gloves ; twenty-three *snipe* ; *people*, *fowl*, *fish*, *cattle*, etc.

**29. (131) B. The ordinary s ending.**

(that is: the sounds *-iz* added to a sibilant [s, z, sh, zh] ;

the sound *-s* after a voiceless non-sibilant ;  
the sound *-z* after a voiced non-sibilant.)

(a) g s. in all nouns and some pronouns : *prince's*, *duke's*, *king's*, *whose*, *somebody's*.

(b) n a p. in the majority of nouns and some pronouns : *princes*, *dukes*, *kings*, *somebodies*.

(c) g p. in the same words as under (b), if the g p. can at all be used : *princes'*, *dukes'*, *kings'* (*somebodies'*).

(d) The same ending denotes the idea of genitive in all those plurals which are not formed by the addition of *-s* : *men's*, *gentlemen's*, *children's*.

(e) absolute : *ours*, *yours*, *hers*, *theirs*.

**30. (132) C. Other endings.**

**-B.**

n a p. in *dice* ; comp. also *pence*, *halfpence*.

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<sup>1</sup> Here the common plural in *-s* seems also to gain ground ; at any rate, Dr. Murray once told me that he had often heard *deers* ; *sheeps* is found once in Shakespeare, *Love's L. L.*, II., 219 (pun with *ships*).

**-n.**

(a) n a p. in *oxen*.

(b) abs. in *mine*.

**31. (133) D. Change in the kernel.**

(1) without any ending.

n a p.: *men, women, geese, teeth, feet, mice, lice*

The plural forms *these* and *those* might be mentioned here or perhaps better under (3), as *-se* [z] is felt as a sort of plural ending.

(2) with the ending *-ren* (or *-n*).

n a p. *children (brethren)*.

(3) with the *-s* ending.

n a(g) p. *wives* (and *wives'*) and others in *f*; *paths* and others in *th*, *houses*, the change in the kernel consisting here in the substitution of the voiced for the voiceless sound.<sup>1</sup>

As an ulterior case in point might be mentioned the frequent omission of the *p*- sound in such plurals as *months, sixths, elevenths*, etc. In words ending in *-nd* the plural is frequently pronounced without the *d*: *soun(d)s*, etc. We are perhaps allowed to consider Shakespeare's rhyming *downs* and *hounds* together (*Venus and Ad.*, 677) as an early instance of this pronunciation.

(4) an entirely new kernel

is finally used to distinguish cases in some pronouns: *I, me, we, us*, etc.

<sup>1</sup> In *staff*—*staves* we have the same consonantal change combined with a change of the vowel sound, but the modern language tends to make two regular words out of the one irregular: *staff*—*staffs*, and *stave*—*staves*.

**32.** (134) *Coalescence* of formerly distinct cases is found very extensively.

n a p. = n a s. in the words mentioned above, A 2.

g p. = g s. consequently in nearly all the same words.

The three cases : *gen. sg., nom. (and acc.) pl., and gen. pl.*, have become identical in nearly all words, so that you can very soon enumerate the very few words in which they differ from each other, namely :—

All the three cases are different : *child's, children, children's* ; similarly with *man, woman*, and finally with a few words where the *gen. pl.* is, however, scarcely used at all : *tooth, goose, mouse, louse ; dice, pence, oxen* ; compounds on the model of *son-in-law* would belong here if genitive plurals, like *sons-in-law's*, were not universally avoided.

g s. different from n a p., which is identical with g p. : *wife's, wives, wives'* and the other word mentioned under D 3.

The two genitives are different from the two nominatives in the nouns mentioned under A 2.

**33.** (135) A comparison with Old English will show that all the vocalic and most of the nasal case-endings have been abandoned ; the changes of the kernel have been considerably limited so that more particularly those which were not in themselves sufficient to distinguish cases have been given up ; further we see that one difference, which was unknown to Old English, has been made subservient to case-distinguishing purposes (O. E. genitive *wulfes*, nomina-

tive plural *wulfas*, both of them pronounced with *v*; modern, *wolf's*, *wolves*), and finally the provinces of the unchanged kernel and of the *s* form have been very considerably extended.

## II. SYNTACTICAL CLASSIFICATION.

### 34. (136)

N a. s g. : —

p l. : -s, +, (-n, —).

G e n. s g. : -s, poss. pron.

p l. : -s, + s, (-ns); poss. pron.

Here, as in a few places above, I have silently omitted the exceptional forms of the personal pronouns.

**35.** (137) A comparison with Old English will here show that—apart from a few pronouns, which distinguish a nominative and an objective case—the old nominative, accusative, dative and instrumental cases have coalesced to form a common case, which shows moreover a few traces of the fact that the old genitive plural grew to be formally identical with the common case of the singular number (*e.g.*, a *twopenny* stamp, a five *pound* note).

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**36.** (138) The question naturally arises, How has it come about that the Old English system of declensions has been so completely metamorphosed? Is it possible to point out any single cause as the effectual agent in bringing about this revolution?

An answer which has been given often enough, and which is offered by some scholars even now, was formulated by one of the foremost masters of the historical science of language as follows :—

“ Any violent mixture of two languages is against nature, and results in a rapid destruction of the forms of both. When a great mass of *French* words rushed in upon the English language, few if any forms passed over to its grammar, but the Saxon forms suddenly collapsed, because they did not agree with the new roots, and because the genius of the language was led by the crude employment of the foreign material to neglect the native flexion. . . . This rapid sinking from the more perfect Anglo-Saxon forms . . . is easily explained by *influence from Danish and Norman-French*. According to a universal and natural law, where two different tongues come in collision, grammatical forms are lost. One of the most important consequences was the thorough introduction of *s* in all plurals, which agrees with French usage and is not entirely unknown to the Saxon grammar.”<sup>1</sup>

**37.** (139) Such an influence from Norman-French, however, is contradicted by various considerations, partly of a general, partly of a special nature. It would, indeed, have been at least imaginable, supposing

<sup>1</sup> GRIMM, *Deutsche Grammatik*, i. (1819), pp. xxxii. and 177-178. So also Madvig, *Kleine philol. Schriften*, 27; Earle, *Philology of the Engl. Tongue*, 1st ed., p. 41; Elze, *Englische Philologie*, p. 245.

that the two constituent elements of the population, the French-speaking and the English-speaking, had been co-equal in numbers. But this was not the case. Moreover, it is admitted that the vast majority of the conquered people spoke English and never learned to speak French; they were not, therefore, exposed to having their sense of the grammatical structure of their native dialects impaired by commixture with foreign modes of speech. And, where influence from the foreign idiom could not be avoided, it must have taken place essentially in the same manner as French and English influence each other at the present day, by the adoption, that is, of single words, which are then incorporated, substantially, into the native system of grammar.<sup>1</sup> Just as a modern Frenchman inflects the loan-words *leader*, *sport*, in accordance with the laws of his own language, and turns the English verb *stop* into *stopper* (*stoppant*, etc.),—just as, when some composite expression passes into his language, he does not shrink from forming such a derivative as *strugg(le)-for-lifeur* (Daudet),—precisely in the same manner did the English peasant act when he caught up a word from the courtly speech of the Normans. Quite instinctively he affixed to it his own terminations without troubling himself for a moment whether they would or would not ‘agree with the new roots’.

**38.** (140) But, whilst the Norman Conquest exerted no *direct* influence on English grammatical

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Murray, *The Engl. Language*, in the *Encycl. Brit.*, viii., 333.

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structure, there can be no doubt that it went far to accelerate the development of change *indirectly*. This was principally due to the fact that England was for some centuries without that retarding and conservative influence which will always make itself felt wherever cultivated classes speaking a "refined" speech exist side by side with a proletariat whose linguistic peculiarities are branded as vulgarisms, or as downright solecisms. Any such control as comes from an upper class whose more old-fashioned language is looked upon as a model, and, partly at least, imitated by the lower classes, was precluded at the period we are speaking of, inasmuch as the upper classes did not speak English, or, at best, spoke only bad English. In consequence of this, not only was the literary tradition of the English language lost or reduced to a minimum, but even in its oral transmission, which is always the more important matter, and was especially so then, one element was wanting which generally assists in stemming the tide of revolutionary tendencies.

**39.** (141) If now we look at the only detail in English accidence for which a Norman descent is claimed (namely, the plural *-s*<sup>1</sup>), some remarks will

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<sup>1</sup> Even Sayce says, *Introd. to Sc. of L.*, i., 172: "The great extension of the English plural in *-s*, confined as it was in Anglo-Saxon to a comparatively few words, seems due to Norman-French influence". The same view is taken by Strong, *Academy*, Oct. 20, 1893; cf. also the correspondence in the following numbers of that paper between Napier, Earle and myself.



have to be made which perhaps have not been all propounded before.

(1) The growth of the plural *-s* cannot be separated from that of *-s* in the genitive case. Now the latter gained ground even more rapidly and extensively than the plural *-s*, and French influence is here utterly unimaginable. Why, then, resort to it with regard to the other ending?

(2) The plural in *-s* was long before the Conquest extended to many nouns which had formerly had other endings, belonging to the *i*- and *u*- classes, as also to some of the consonant stems (*wyrmas*, *winas*, *sunas*, *hæleðas*, etc., see § 17). This shows that the tendency of the language would have been the same even if William the Conqueror had never crossed the Channel.

(3) *-S* became universal in the North at an earlier date than in the South, where we should expect to find French influence strongest, but where *-en* seems for a long time to have had better chances of prevailing in all nouns than *-s*.

(4) In Old French *-s* was not used to the same extent as now as a plural ending; indeed, it can hardly be called a plural sign proper, as it was in the most numerous and important class of nouns the sign of the nom. sg. and of the acc. pl., but not of the nom. pl. If, therefore, an Englishman of (say) the thirteenth century used the *-s* in the nom. pl., he was in accord with the rules of his native tongue, but not with those of French.

(5) If *-s* was due to the Normans, we should expect it in the plural of the adjectives as well as of nouns; but, as a matter of fact, adjectives take it extremely rarely,<sup>1</sup> and hardly except in those cases where a Romance adjective is placed after its noun. Everywhere else, Middle and Modern English adjectives have no *-s* in plural, agreeing therein with the old native tradition, but not with French grammar.

(6) And, finally, it is worth noting that the two endings, Norman *-s* without any vowel, and English *-es* (originally *-as*) with the vowel pronounced, were kept distinct for about four hundred years in English; they are not confounded till, in the fifteenth century, the weak *e* disappears in pronunciation.

**40.** (142) Thus, at the one definite point where the theory of French influence has been advanced with regard to *accidence*, it is utterly unable to stand the test of historical investigation. And it is the same case, I believe, with many of the assertions put forward of late years by E. EINENKEL with regard to a French influence exerted wholesale on English *syntax*.<sup>2</sup> Einkenkel's method is simplicity itself. In

<sup>1</sup> According to Ten Brink only twice in the whole of the poetic parts of the *Canterbury Tales* (*Chaucers Sprache u. Verskunst*, § 243), to which add *Hous of Fame*, 460, the "goddess celestials". Where Chaucer gives a direct prose translation from French, this *-s* occurs more frequently, thus in the *Tale of Melibeus*, which Ten Brink does not mention.

<sup>2</sup> See his *Streifzüge durch die mc. Syntax*, 1887, his articles in the *Anglia*, xiii., and in Paul's *Grundriss der germanischen Philologie*, i., 907 and foll. Einkenkel's syntactical investigations

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dealing with any syntactical phenomenon of Middle English, he searches through Tobler's *Verm. Beiträge zur Frz. Grammatik* and the ever-increasing literature of German dissertations on Old French syntax, in quest of some other phenomenon of a similar kind. As soon as this is discovered, it is straightway made the prototype of its Middle English analogue, sometimes in spite of the French parallel being perhaps so rare a use that even Tobler himself can only point out a very few instances of it, whilst its English counterpart is of everyday occurrence. In several cases French influence is assumed, although Einkenkel himself mentions that the phenomenon in question existed even in Old English, or, not unfrequently, though it must be considered so simple and natural a development as to be quite likely to spring up spontaneously in a variety of different languages. A little knowledge of Scandinavian languages would, for example, with regard to many points have convinced Einkenkel that these present the very same phenomena which when occurring in English he explains from Old French.

41. (143) A far greater influence than that exercised upon English by the Gallicised Normans must be ascribed to the *Danish* Wikings, who for such a long space of time were acting a prominent part in Britain, and whose significance for the life of the

will, of course, in some measure keep their value, even though his theories on the origin of the phenomena he discusses are exaggerated and erroneous.

English people cannot easily be over-estimated. As for the language, it should be borne in mind that the tongue spoken by the Danes was so nearly akin with the native dialects that the two peoples could understand one another without much difficulty. But it was just such circumstances which made it natural that many *nuances* of grammar should be sacrificed, the intelligibility of either tongue coming to depend mainly on its mere vocabulary. It is in harmony with this view that the wearing away and levelling of grammatical forms in the regions in which the Danes chiefly settled was a couple of centuries in advance of the same process in the more southern parts of the country.

A fully satisfactory solution of the question of the mutual relations of North English and Scandinavian at that time must be regarded as hopeless on account of the small number, and generally inadequate character, of linguistic records; and, unless some fresh sources become accessible to us, we shall probably never learn clearly and unequivocally which points of correspondence in the two languages are attributable to primitive affinities, which others to loans from one language to the other, or, finally, how much may be due to independent parallel development in two areas which offered such striking analogies in so many essential particulars. But, as I hold, any linguistic change should primarily be explained on the basis of the language itself, while analogues from other languages may serve as illustra-

tions and help to show what in the development of a language is due to psychological causes of a universal character, and what is, on the other hand, to be considered the effect of the idiosyncrasies of the particular idiom.

42. (144) I return to the question of the cause of the simplification of the English system of declensions, and I will quote another answer, which agrees better than Grimm's with the linguistic theories prevailing now-a-days. This explanation is formulated by one of the most competent English scholars of our time, Dr. J. A. H. MURRAY, as follows :—<sup>1</sup>

"The total loss of grammatical *gender* in English, and the almost complete disappearance of *cases*, are *purely phonetic phenomena*".

In other words: a phonetic law which operates "blindly," *i.e.*, without regard to the signification, causes the Old English unstressed vowels *-a*, *-e*, *-u*, to become merged in an obscure *-e* in Middle English; as these endings were very often distinctive of cases, the Old English cases were consequently lost. Another phonetic law was operating in a similar manner by causing the loss of the final *-n*, which was equally utilised, though in a different way, in the Old English declension. Upon this I have to remark, first, that beside the phonetic laws must at all events be mentioned analogy. It is this which, for example, has led to the levelling of the nominative plural and dative plural: if phonetic decay had been

<sup>1</sup> *Encycl. Brit.*, viii., 400.

the only factor, Old English *stanas* and *stanum* would still have been distinguished from one another, namely as *stones* and *stone*; whereas, in fact, the former form has been extended to the dative. This, however, must by no means be interpreted as an objection to Dr. Murray and the scholars who hold his view, and who are as fully alive to this principle of explanation as anybody else.

43. (145) I have stated elsewhere my reasons for disbelieving in the axiom of the so-called young grammarian school of the blind working of sound laws, and in the theory of sound laws and analogy sufficing between them to explain everything in linguistic development.<sup>1</sup> Here I shall add, with regard to the special question concerning us in this chapter, that the young grammarians' view does not look deep enough in its search for explanations. If simplification of forms is to be attributed in the main to the phonetic law of unstressed terminations, what, then, is the *cause of the phonetic law*? And if, on the other hand, analogy has played an important part in this development, the question arises, if it is not possible to suggest causes why the principle of analogy should have thus asserted itself.

Let us for a moment suppose that each of the terminations *-a*, *-e*, *-u*, bore in Old English its own distinctive and sharply defined meaning, which was necessary to the right understanding of the sentences in which the terminations occurred. Would there in

<sup>1</sup> See *Phonetische Grundfragen*, Leipzig, 1904, chap. vii.

that case be any probability that a phonetic law tending to their levelling could ever succeed in establishing itself? Most certainly not; the all-important regard for intelligibility would have been sure to counteract any inclination towards a slurred pronunciation of the terminations. Nor would there have been any occasion for new formations by analogy, as the endings were already sufficiently alike.

**44.** (146) The above comparative survey of the declensions of Old and Modern English furnishes an answer to the questions proposed, and makes the whole causality appear in a much clearer light than would be possible by any other arrangement of the grammatical facts: *the cause of the decay of the Old English apparatus of declensions lay in its manifold incongruities*. The same termination did not always denote the same thing; the same case was signified now by this, now by that means; many relations plainly distinguished from each other in one class of words were but imperfectly, if at all, distinguishable in another class. And yet there is a still further cause of mixture and confusion which our arrangement does not bring out—the one, namely, which is latent in terms like dative, accusative, etc. In fact, these terms have no clear and definite meaning in the case of Old English, any more than in the case of kindred tongues; in many cases it did not even matter which of two or more cases the speaker chose to employ. Thus, not a few verbs existed which were employed

now with one, now with another case; and it was often impossible to perceive any accompanying difference of meaning.<sup>1</sup> And so also with other parts of speech: the preposition *on*, as applied to time, sometimes governed the dative (instrumental), sometimes the accusative: thus we find in close succession (*Chron.*, 979, C.), *on þys geare . . . on þone sunnandæg*; (*ibid.*, 992, E.) *on þere nihte ðe hi on ðone dæi togædere cumon sceoldon*; <sup>2</sup> similarly (*Oros.*, 136, 23 and foll.) *on westweardum þisses middangeardes, . . . on easte-weardum þeosan middangearde* (comp. same page, l. 7), and so on.

45. (147) This condition of things naturally gave rise to a good deal of uncertainty, which manifested itself partly in a rather inaccurate pronunciation of the endings, partly in the use of them in places where they did not belong.

This now and then happened in such a manner as to bring about coincidences of sound without assisting clearness, nay, even at its expense, as, for instance, is the case when we find in the *Cura Past.*, 166, 2 and 20: to *anra* ðara ðreora burga, instead of *anre* (see Sweet's note in his *A. S. Reader*, p. 191). Generally, however, such uses of endings on analogy

<sup>1</sup> See particularly the materials collected by M. Sohrauer, *Kleine Beitr. zur æ. Gramm.*, pp. 10-26.

<sup>2</sup> *On* with the dative case here corresponded to an older *on*, while with the accusative it was the old *an* (comp. Germ *in*, *an*), but I doubt very much if the old West Saxon author was alive to any difference in his use of *on* in the two phrases.



are apt to crop up in such places particularly where the traditional terminations are not sufficiently distinct, or where cases have been levelled which it is important should be kept apart. For example, *giefa* stands alike for the nominative plural and the genitive plural, and misapprehensions are the consequence. These are obviated by the extension to the nominative and genitive respectively of the termination *-e* from the *i*-class and *-ena* from the *n*-class (nominative *giefe*, genitive *giefena*).

But if the transmutations, phonetic as well as non-phonetic, of the old declensions took their rise from the numerous inconsistencies of the system and its want of fixed boundaries, formal or functional, then what is described above as the true grammatical arrangement exhibits the prospects of the various cases and endings in their struggle for existence. By its aid we are, in some measure, in a position to cast the horoscope of the whole system and predict the main features of its destinies.

**46.** (148) The vocalic terminations (B) were evidently the least distinct and least sharply defined; each of these had many values, nor were they uniformly distributed in the different classes of inflexion. Here accordingly every succeeding generation when it came to learning the language was offered only scanty points of support and a great many chances of going wrong. It is therefore not surprising that these endings were confounded and effaced and in a later period entirely dropped, as

there was no well-defined barrier between the use of the bare kernel of the word, and the kernel *plus* the vocalic termination *-e*, in which the endings *-e*, *-a*, *-u*, had at that time been merged.

The nasal endings were possessed of greater power of resistance. But they, too, were doomed, chiefly owing to the exceedingly common use of the ending *-an* in the weak forms of adjectives, where it was of no consequence whatever for the signification, and could therefore be neglected without any loss. In the case of verbal forms, too, where endings in *-n* occurred also, they did not perform any function of sufficient importance to check the tendency to drop the sound in pronunciation; in fact, at an early period we meet with collocations like *binde we*, *binde ge*, *mote we*, etc., in which the *-n* had fallen away (Siev., § 360).

**47.** (149) Where, on the other hand, the *-n* was protected by a following vowel, it could withstand the levelling tendencies better. This would be especially the case in the genitive plural, because of the distinctive meaning of this genitive. The same thing is also particularly true of the two *-s* endings, each of which was confined to a sharply limited sphere of use. The *-s* is too important to be left out; if, on the other hand, the two endings *-as* and *-es* are levelled in the Middle English *-es*, this is mainly due to the influence exercised by the other endings. As *-a* and *-e* were not distinctive enough in point of meaning to oppose a strong resistance to the tendency prevailing in all

languages to obscure vowels in weak syllables, nay, even invited this tendency, *-as* and *-es* had to submit to the resulting "phonetic law". This they did without any very great detriment to intelligibility, the connexion in which they occur being nearly everywhere sufficient to show whether the genitive singular or nominative plural was meant, especially after the rule had been established by which the genitive is always placed before its governing word (see chapter iii.).

As regards the prospects which changes of kernel have of maintaining themselves, we can only be certain of this much, that those which have become attended with inherent change of signification are, by a natural consequence, more likely to be permanent than the others, which are more liable to be affected by levelling tendencies, inasmuch as a new regular form which agrees with the shape of the word in other cases is sure to be understood as well as, or even better than, the traditional one. But, on the other hand, forces tending to change pronunciation are continually at work, and these give rise to fresh changes of kernel; we may mention, for instance, the laws of quantity which have split up the Old English *sceadu* into the two Modern English words *shade* and *shadow*. To foretell the durability of such modifications is, of course, a matter of impossibility.

48. (150) To sum up, setting aside changes of kernel, the other modifications of the nouns in Old English declensions are of a character to enable us

to form an opinion on the main features of their destinies by considering the reciprocal relations of phonetic expression and inward signification, the more so as it was just the least ambiguous endings (*-as*, *-es*) that were used to denote the syntactical relations which are the most distinctive and appear to be the most indispensable in language, *viz.*, plurality and connexion (genitive). Logically to define the other case-relations is a matter of much more difficulty : the dative and accusative cases often come in contact with each other, and both have also some points of agreement with the nominative. Hence arises the chance of endless confusions, even where the forms are sharply distinguished (see the next chapter). In fact, there is every occasion, be it said incidentally, alike from a formal and syntactical point of view, to prefer the arrangement of the cases prevalent in Denmark since Rask—nominative accusative, dative, genitive—to any other, and more especially to that still current in Germany where the genitive is placed between the nominative and the accusative.

## CHAPTER II.

### CASE-SHIFTINGS IN THE PRONOUNS.

**49.** (151) In the Oldest English pronouns we find the nominative, accusative, and dative cases distinct both in point of accident and syntax, although in a few pronouns there is no formal difference between the nominative and accusative (in the plurals of the third person (*hie*); in the neuter (*hit*, *hwæt*, etc.), in the feminine form *heo* or *hie*).

The first step in the simplification of this system is the abandonment of the separate forms *mec*, *þec*, *usic*, *eowic*, *uncit*, *incit*, which are used only in the very oldest texts as accusatives distinct from the datives *me*, *þe*, *us*, *eow*, *unc*, *inc*, and which are soon ousted by the latter forms. By parallel developments occurring somewhat later, the old dative forms *hire* (*hir*, *her*), *him* and *hwam* (*whom*) are made to fill the offices held hitherto by the old accusatives *heo*, *hine* and *hwone*. In some of the southern counties *hine* is, however, preserved up till our times in the form of [an], see Ellis, *Early Engl. Pronunciation*, v., p. 43; in the literary transcription of these dialects this is written 'un, e.g., in Fielding's *Tom Jones* (Squire

Western, etc.), and in Thackeray's *Pendennis* (i., 62, "Show Mr. Pendennis up to 'un").<sup>1</sup> In the plural, also, the dative form has expelled the old acc.; *hem* (O. E. *him*, *heom*; preserved in familiar and vulgar speech: "I know 'em") and the later *them* are originally datives;<sup>2</sup> the neuter singular, on the other hand, has preserved the old accusative forms *hit* (*it*), *þæt* (*that*), *hwæt* (*what*), at the expense of the old datives.

The reason of this constant preferring of the dative forms in the person-indicating pronouns is no doubt the fact that these pronouns are used as indirect objects more often than either nouns or adjectives;<sup>3</sup> at any rate, it is a phenomenon very frequently found in various languages; compare Danish *ham*, *hende*, *dem*, *hvem*, originally datives, now also accusatives and partly even nominatives (while it is true that in *mig* and *dig* the acc. has outlived the dative); North

<sup>1</sup> *Pendennis*, p. 50, Thackeray uses 'n as a plural ("Hand down these 'ere trunks." "Hand'n down yourself"); but this is hardly due to a direct and correct observation of the real spoken language.

<sup>2</sup> *Chron.*, 893, the Parker MS. has "hie asetton *him* . . . ofer," but the Laud MS.: "hi ásætton *hi* . . . ofer"; it is perhaps allowable here to suppose a blending of the transitive "asetton hie" and the intransitive "asæton him"; cf. § 188. But in *Chron.*, 828, we have an indubitable outcome of the tendency to replace the old acc. by the dat., for the Parker MS. reads: "he *hie* to eaþmodre hersumnesse gedyde," but the Laud MS.: "he *heom* ealle [N.B. not eallum!] to eadmodere hyrsumnesse gedyde".

<sup>3</sup> A. Kock, in *Nord. Tidskrift for Philologi*, n. r. iii., 256.

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German *wem* for *wen*,<sup>1</sup> French *lui* as an absolute pronoun (while the acc. has carried the day in *elle*, *eux*, *elles*; *moi* and *toi* may be either); Italian *lui*, *lei*, *loro*,<sup>2</sup> etc.

50. (152) In this chapter I propose to deal at some length with those tendencies to further modifications of the pronominal case-system which may be observed after the accusatives and datives have everywhere become identical. The forms concerning us are in their present spelling:—

nom.	acc.—dat.
<i>I, we</i>	<i>me, us</i>
<i>thou, ye</i>	<i>thee, you</i>
<i>he, she, they</i>	<i>him, her, them</i>
<i>who</i>	<i>whom.</i>

Simplification has gone further in the case of the pronouns of the second person than in that of the others; in fact, if we were to believe the ordinary grammars, the substitution of *you* for *ye* is the only point in which a deviation from the old system has taken place. But ordinary grammars are not always trustworthy; in laying down their rules, they are too

<sup>1</sup> Franke, in *Phonetische Studien*, ii., 50.

<sup>2</sup> Storm, *Engl. Philologie*, 208; compare also the interesting remarks in Franceschi, *In Città e in Campagna*, 585: “*lui, lei, loro*, per egli, ella, eglino ed elleno, che nel parlar familiare parrebbe affettazione. . . . Questi e altri idiotismi e certe sgrammaticature . . . io fo di quando in quando scappar fuori dai mei personaggi, perchè vivono nella bocca del popolo toscano, come sa chi vi nacque o vi stette lungamente in mezzo, e portò amore alla sua parlata.”

apt to forget that the English language is one thing, common-sense or logic another thing, and Latin grammar a third, and that these three things have really in many cases very little to do with one another. Schoolmasters generally have an astonishing talent for not observing real linguistic facts, and an equally astonishing inclination to stamp everything as faulty that does not agree with their narrow rules; and the precepts inculcated in the school-room have no doubt had some influence in checking natural tendencies, though the following pages will suffice to show that the best authors have in many points deviated more from the rules laid down in grammars than is generally supposed.

**51.** (153) Many of the phenomena I shall treat of have, as a matter of course, been noticed and partly explained by modern grammarians of the historical school; I shall specially mention KOCH, *Hist. Gramm.*, ii. (especially p. 244<sup>1</sup>); MATZNER, *Engl. Gramm.*, ii. *passim*; ABBOTT, *A Shakespearian Grammar*, § 205 ff.; A. SCHMIDT, *Shakespeare-Lexikon*; STORM, *Englische Philologie*, 1881, p. 207 ff.; GUMMERE, *The English Dative-Nom. of the Person. Pron.*, in *American Journ. of Philol.*, iv.; W. FRANZ, *Die*

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<sup>1</sup> In the second edition of Koch's work, Prof. Zupitza has already remarked that the earliest of Koch's examples must be explained differently or are untrustworthy; but even Koch's "altenglische" examples prove nothing; thus *þam* in "þer restid þam down" must certainly be the common reflexive dative (see below, § 86), and not the subject of the sentence.



*dialektspr. bei Dickens, Engl. St.*, xii., 223 f., and *Zur syntax des älteren Neuenglisch, ibid.*, xvii., 212 ff.; KELLNER, in the Introduction to *Caxton's Blanchardyn* (EETS. Extra Series 58).

On the whole these authors content themselves with a purely lexical treatment of the matter, giving for instance all the examples of *I* for *me* and *vice versa* under one head, and only occasionally offering an explanation of some phenomena; the fullest and most satisfactory explanations are found in Storm's excellent work. In the following sections I shall attempt a systematic arrangement according to the psychological or phonetic principles underlying the phenomena and causing speakers or writers to use another case than that exacted by the rules of ordinary grammar. I shall first take those classes of case-shiftings which are of a more general character and may occur more or less frequently in all languages of our type, giving last those which belong more specially to English or to one particular period of English.

It must be specially mentioned that in many of the sentences quoted two or even more causes of shifting have operated concurrently.

### I. Relative Attraction.

**52.** (154) A pronoun in the principal proposition is often put in the case which the corresponding relative pronoun has or ought to have. This is particularly easy to explain where no relative pronoun is used; the so-called relative ellipsis originates

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in a construction *apo koinou*, the personal pronoun belonging equally well to both propositions. Examples abound, both where the relative pronoun is expressed and where it is understood.

Chaucer, *M.P.*, 5, 623, "*Him* that she cheest, *he* shal her have as swythe" | Caxton (see Kellner, xiv.), "*him* that he rought with full stroke was all in to brused" | Shak., *Cor.*, v., 6, 5, "*Him* I accuse (:) the city port by this hath enter'd" | *Ant.*, iii., 1, 15, "*him* we serues [serve's] away" | *Rom.*, 1032 (ii., 3, 85), "*her* I loue now Doth grace for grace, and loue for loue allow" (the oldest quarto *she whom*) | *Ham.*, ii., 1, 42, "*him* you would sound . . . be assured *he* closes . . ." | *Temp.*, v., 1, 15; *As.*, i., 1, 46; 1 *H. VI.*, iv., 7, 75 | Tennyson, 370, "*Our noble Arthur, him* Ye scarce can overpraise, will hear and know" | Trol., *Duke's Ch.*, i., 161 (a lady writes), "I have come to be known as *her* whom your uncle trusted and loved, as *her* whom your wife trusted . . ."

Very often after *it is* :—

Marlowe, *Jew*, 1034, "'Tis not thy wealth, but *her* that I esteeme" (= I esteeme her) | Sh., 2 *H. VI.*, iv., 1, 117, "it is *thee* I feare" | *Sonn.* 62, "'Tis *thee* (my self) that for my self I praise" | Thack., *Pend.*, i., 269, "it's not *me* I'm anxious about" | *ibid.*, iii., 301, "it is not *him* I want" | Trol., *Old Man*, 121, "It is *her* you should consult on such a matter".

Nom. for acc. is rarer in case of relative attraction.<sup>1</sup>

Sh., *I. A.*, 109, "thus *he* that overrul'd I over-  
swayed" | *Troil.*, ii., 3, 252, "praise him that  
got thee, *she* that gaue thee sucke"; comp.  
*Hml.*, i., 2, 105; 2 *H. VI.*, iii., 2, 89; *R. III.*, iv.,  
4, 101 f. | Bunyan (see Storm, 211), "the en-  
couraging words of *he* that led in the front".

## II. Blendings.

**53.** (155) Contaminations or blendings of two constructions between which the speaker is wavering occur in all languages. The first class of contaminations concerning us here is caused by vacillation between *an accusative with infinitive and a finite verb*, exemplified in the Bible phrase: O. E., "*Hwæne* secgað men þæt sy mannes sunu?" Auth. V., "*Whom* do men say that I the son of man am?" (Matt., xvi., 13), as compared with the more "grammatically correct" construction in Wyclif: "*Whom* seien men to be mannus sone?" In the parallel passage, Luke, ix., 18 and 20, Wyclif writes: "*Whom* seien the puple that Y am? . . . But *who* seien 3e that Y am?" From secular authors I shall quote:—

Chauc., *Morr.*, iii., 26, 803, "as ye han herd *me*  
sayd" [rhyme: apayd, for *me* *saye* or *I*  
*said*] | *B.*, 665, "yet wole we vs auyse *whom*

<sup>1</sup> Relative attraction is the reason of the three abnormal *he*'s in Caxton which Kellner quotes on p. xv., but does not explain.

that we wole that [v. r. om. that] shal ben our Justyse" | Sh., *Cor.*, iv., 2, 2, "the nobility . . . *whom* we see haue sided in his behalfe" | *Temp.*, iii., 3, 92, "Ferdinand (*whom* they suppose is droun'd)" | *Meas.*, ii., 1, 72, "[my wife] *whom* I thanke heauen is an honest woman" | *Tim.*, iv., 3, 120, "a bastard, *whom* the oracle Hath doubtfully pronounced thy [fol. the] throat shall cut" | Fielding, *T. J.*, iv., 130, "I would have both *you* and *she* know that it is not for her fortune he follows her" | Darwin, *Life and L.*, i., 60, "to assist those *whom* he thought deserved assistance" | Muloch, *Halifax*, ii., 11, "one *whom* all the world knew was so wronged and so unhappy".<sup>1</sup>

Note also Sh., *Cor.*, i., 1, 236, "And were I anything but what I am, I would wish me only *he*," where *he* is the only natural form, as *him* would only obscure the meaning of the phrase.<sup>2</sup> In R. Haggard, *Cleopatra*, ii.,

<sup>1</sup> The phenomenon is nearly akin to the well-known insertion of what should be the subject of the subordinate clause as the object of the principal proposition; see, for instance, Chaucer, *B.*, 4392, "Herkeneth *thise blisful briddes* how they singe, And see *the fressche floures* how they springe" | Sh., *Wint. T.*, i., 2, 181, "you perceiue *me* not how I give lyne". A good many examples have been collected by Kellner, *Blanch.*, xvi. ("And God saw the light that it was good"); cf. also Wright's note, Sh., *Tw. N.*, p. 100.

<sup>2</sup> Compare also Stevenson, *Treas. Isl.*, 171, "Some one was close behind, I knew not *whom*".

121, "rather than I would see her thy wedded wife and *thou* her loving lord," we have an approach to the phenomenon mentioned below, § 164.

When we find in the middle of the sixteenth century such sentences as these :—

*Roister D.*, 38, "And let me see *you* play me such a part againe" | *ibid.*, 76, "I woulde see *you* aske pardon,"

we may be pretty sure that the author meant *you* as the acc. case and the verbs *play* and *aske* as infinitives; but to a later generation neither the form of the pronoun nor that of the verb would exclude the possibility of *you* being the nominative before finite verbs (= let me see (that) you . . .).

54. (156) In these cases the blending was due to the fact that what was grammatically the object of one verb was logically the subject of another verb. This is particularly frequent in the combination *let us* (go, etc.), supplanting the older construction *go we*, etc.<sup>1</sup> The logical subject is here often put in the nominative, especially if separated from the word *let*.—

Genesis, xxi. 44, "Let *us* make a covenant, *I and thou*"<sup>2</sup> | Udall, *Roister*, 21, "Let all these matters passe, and *we* three sing a song"

<sup>1</sup> Still found in Sh., e.g., *Macb.*, ii., 2, 65, "Retyre *we*" | v., 2, 25, "March *we* on".

<sup>2</sup> Compare the O. E. translation, "þæt freondscipe sig betwux unc, *me* and þe," which is a regular appositional construction, cf. § 61

| Sh., *Merch.*, iii., 2, 21, "let fortune goe to hell for it, not *I*" | *Cæs.*, iii., 1, 95, "let no man abide this deede, but *we* the doers" | Byron, iv., 240, "Let *He* who made thee answer that" | Hughes, *Tom Brown's Sch.*, 3, "let *you and I* cry quits".

Storm (*E. Philol.*, 211) has some modern quotations (from Dickens, who writes also: "*Leave Nell and I* to toil and work"), and quotes the Norwegian [and Danish] colloquial *lad vi det* for *lad os det*. In the corresponding Dutch construction both the nom. and acc. are allowed: "laat *mij* nu toonen" as well as "laat *ik* nu toonen" (let me now show); similarly "laat *hem* [*hij*] nu toonen, laat *ons* [laten *wij*] nu toonen, lat *hem* [laten *ze*] nu toonen".<sup>1</sup> In a passage from Guy of Warwick, 3531, "*Let hym* fynde a sarasyn And *y* to fynde a knyght of myn," we have a transition case between this phenomenon and that dealt with in § 62.

A similar confusion after the verb *make* is found in Sh., *Temp.*, iv., 1, 217, "mischeefe which may make this island Thine owne for ever, and *I* thy Caliban for aye thy foote-licker"; here Caliban forgets the first part of his sentences and goes on as if the beginning had been "this island shall become". So also in *Rich. II.*, iv., 1, 216, "[God] *make me*, that nothing

<sup>1</sup> See *Taalstudie*, 1887, 376. Mr. C. Stoffel informs me that the two constructions are not exact equivalents, a difference being made, for instance, between *laat hij gaan*, "qu'il aille," and *laat hem gaan*, "allow him to go".

haue, with nothing grieu'd, And *thou* with all pleas'd,  
that hast ali atchieu'd”.

In these cases the nominative is used in spite of grammatical rules requiring the acc., because the word is thought of as the subject; this is even, though rarely, the case after a preposition; in *Roister Doister*, p. 72, I find: “Nay *as for they*, shall euery mother's childe die;” and a phrase in a letter that is read aloud twice in the same play runs the first time “*as for all them* that woulde do you wrong” (p. 51), but the second time “as for all they” (p. 57). In § 68 ff. we shall see some more instances of the nominative, as the case proper to the subject, getting the better of the acc., required by earlier grammatical rules.

**55.** (157) Other contaminations leading to confusions of two cases are found here and there. In Sh., *Temp.*, ii., 1, 28, we read: “Which, of *he*, or Adrian . . . First begins to crow?” This is a blending of “Which, he or A.,” and “Which of [the two] him and A.,” or else *of* may be a printer's error for *or*, as conjectured by Collier. In Sir Andrew's interruption, *Tw. N.*, ii., 5, 87, “[you waste the treasure of your time with a foolish knight.—] That's *mee* I warrant you,” *me* is due to the use of the accus. in the preceding sentence (=with me,; immediately afterwards he says: “I knew 'twas *I*;” in Malvolio's speech, “If this should be *thee*,” *thee* is similarly the

<sup>1</sup> Compare *Hamlet*, 1, 4, 54, and H. Fritzsche's note in his edition of that play, Berlin, 1880.

object of the preceding *I loue*. Comp. Thack., *Pend.*, iii., 87, "If ever I *saw* a man in love, that man is *him*". The opposite result of the contamination is found in Sh., *Troil.*, ii., 3, 102, "Achillis hath inveigled his foole from him.—*Who*, Thersites?—*He*" (= who is it? it is he); parallel cases occur at every moment in colloquial language.

**56.** (158) A good deal of confusion arises from *some words being both prepositions and conjunctions*. With regard to *but*, Dr. Murray says in *N. E. D.* :—

"In some of these uses, the conjunction is, even in Modern English, not distinctly separated from the preposition: the want of inflexions in substantives, and the colloquial use of *me*, *us*, for *I*, *we*, etc., as complemental nominatives in the pronouns, making it uncertain whether *but* is to be taken as governing a case. In other words 'nobody else went but me (or I)' is variously analysed as = 'nobody else went except me' and 'nobody else went except (that) I (went),' and as these mean precisely the same thing, both are pronounced grammatically correct." (Comp. also Murray's examples, especially under the heads C. 3 and 4.) It should, however, be remarked that the confusion in the use of *but* is not a consequence of the want of distinct case-endings in the nouns and the use of *me* instead of *I* in other connexions; in my view it is on the contrary the existence of such two-sided words as *but*, etc., that is one of the primary causes of mistakes of *me* for *I* or *vice versâ* and careless uses of the cases generally. Even in such a



language as German, where the cases are generally kept neatly apart, we find such combinations as "niemand kommt mir entgegen *ausser ein unver-schamter*" (Lessing); "wo ist ein gott *ohne der herr*" (Luther); "kein gott ist ohne *ich*," etc.<sup>1</sup>

Sometimes both the preposition and the conjunction would require the same case as in these quotations from Murray's Dict.: "Se is æthwam freond butan dracan anum | bot þe haf i na frend". In the following examples there is a conflict between the two constructions; and in some of them (which I have starred) the nominative is used, although both the preposition and conjunction would require the accusative, or *vice versa*.

*Ancr. R.*, 408, "no þing ne con luuien ariht bute *he* one" | *Chauc.*, *C.*, 282, "no man woot of it but god and *he*" (rhymes with *be*) | *Min. P.*, 2, 30, "no wight woot [it] but *I*" | *Malory*, 42, "neuer manshall hauethatofficebut*he*" | *Marlowe, Jew*, 1576, "I neuer heard of any man but \**he* Malign'd the order of the Iacobines"<sup>2</sup> | *Sh.*, *Cymb.*, i., 1, 24, "I do not thinke, so faire an outward, and such stufte within endowes a man, but \**hee*" | *ibid.*, ii., 3, 153, "That I kisse aught but \**he*" | *As*, i., 2, 18, "my father had no childe, but \**I*" | *Macb.*, iii., 1, 54, (854).

<sup>1</sup> See Paul, *Principien der Sprachgesch.*, 1st ed. 225, 2nd ed. 318; in Danish similar examples abound ("ingen uden jeg," etc.).

<sup>2</sup> Relative attraction concurring.

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"There is none but *he* whose being I doe feare" | *Romeo*, 250, (i., 2, 14), "Earth hath swallowed all my hopes but \**she*" | *R. III.*, ii., 2, 76, "What staves had I but \**they*?" | 2 *H. VI.*, i., 2, 69, "here's none but *thee* and *I*" | *Temp.*, iii., 2, 109, "I neuer saw a woman But onely Sycorax my dam, and \**she*" | Thackeray, *Van. F.*, 521, "how pretty she looked. So do you! Everybody but *me* who am wretched" | R. L. Stevenson, *Child's Garden*, 17, "So there was no one left but *me*".<sup>1</sup>

**57.** (159) *Save (sauf)* presents similar phenomena of confusion, although it is comparatively seldom found as a preposition, as in Matth. Arnold, *Poems*, i., 159, "For of the race of Gods is no one there, save *me* alone"; and in Tennyson, p. 319, "Who should be king save *him* who makes us free?"<sup>2</sup> In Chaucer *sauf (save)* is very common with nom. (*B.*, 474, 627; *G.*, 1355; *I.*, 25; *L. G. W.*, 1633; *Morris*, ii., 221, 493; 342, 801), so also in Shakespeare (*Tw. N.*, iii., 1, 172; *Cæs.*, iii., 2, 66, etc.), and in modern poets (e.g., Byron, iv., 332, "Who shall weep above your universal grave, save *I*?" ). Where the word is not meant as the subject, the accusative is used (e.g., Chaucer, *B.*, 4491,

<sup>1</sup> *Instead of* is sometimes used in such a way as to approach a conjunction; see Mrs. Grand, *The Heavenly Twins*, p. 42, "Now they rule him instead of *him them*".

<sup>2</sup> Matzner (ii., 501) has two examples of *save* with acc., from Rogers and Skelton,

"Save *yow* I herde neuere man so singe;" where, however, one MS. (H) has *ye*). An example of an abnormal use of the nom. is Shak., *Sonn.* 109, 14, "For nothing in this wide universe I call, save *thou*, my rose".

For *except*, compare the following examples :—

Meredith, *Trag. Com.*, 28, "And everybody is to know him except *I*?" | Muloch, *Halifax*, ii., 22, "No one ever knew of this night's episode, except *us* three" | Mrs. Browning (a letter in Mrs. Orr, *Life and Letters of Rob. Br.*, 232), "Nobody exactly understands him except *me* who am in the inside of him and hear him breathe" | Hardy, *Tess*, 101, "Perhaps any woman would, except *me*".

**58.** (160) The conjunctions *as* and *than*, used in comparisons, give rise to similar phenomena. As it is possible to say both "I never saw anybody stronger *than he*" [scil. *is*], and "*than him*" (acc. agreeing with *anybody*), and "I never saw anybody so strong *as he*," and "*as him*," the feeling for the correct use of the cases is here easily obscured, and *he* is used where the rules of grammar would lead us to expect *him*, and conversely. The examples of complete displacement are here, as above, starred :—

Chauc., *B.*, 1025, "So vertuous a lyver in my lyf  
Ne saugh I never, such as *sche*" | *ibid.*, *M. P.*, 3, 984, "Ne swich as *she* ne knew I noon"  
| Udall, *Roister*, 33, "for such as *thou*" (compare *ibid.*, 44) | Marl., *Tamb.*, 1814, "depend

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on such weake helps as *we*" | *ibid.*, 1877, "for these, and such as *we* our selues, For vs" | Greene, *Friar B.*, 12, 66, "I do love the lord, As *he* that's second to thyself in love" (relat. attr.) | Sh., *Rom.*, 239, "For men so old as *we*" | *Shrew*, i., 2, 65, "'twixt such friends as *wee*" | *As*, ii., 5, 58, "Heere shall he see grosse fooles as *he*" | *Wint. T.*, ii., 1, 191 | *Ant.*, iii., 3, 14, "is shee as tall as \**me*?" | Field., *T. J.*, ii., 115, "you are not as good as me" | Trollope, *Duke's Ch.*, iii., 31 (a young lord writes), "the Carbottle people were quite as badly off as \**us*" | Orig. Engl., 42 (vulg.), "some people wot lives [= who live] on the same floor as \**us*, only they are poorer than \**us*" | Thomson, *Rule Britannia*, "The nations not so blest as *thee*, Must in their turn to tyrants fall" | Meredith, *Egoist*, 192, "What was the right of so miserable a creature as *she* to excite disturbances?"

After *such as* the nom. is now the rule:—

Tennyson, *In Mem.*, xxxiv., p. 256, "What then were God to such as *I*?" | *ibid.*, p. 419, "Gawain, was this quest for thee?" "Nay, lord," said Gawain, "not for such as *I*" | Rob. Browning, iii., 78, "The land has none left such as *he* on the bier" | Mrs. Browning, *Sonnets f. t. Port.*, viii., "who hast . . . laid them on the outside of the wall, for such as

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*I to take*" | Ward, *Dav. Grieve*, i., 193, "religion was not for such as *he*" | Buchanan, *Wand. Jew*, 74, "The Roman wars not with such foes as *he*" | Co. Doyle, *Sherl. H.*, i., 181, "God keep you out of the clutches of such a man as *he*".

Even after *as well as* the confusion is found, though in the mouths of vulgar persons :—

Sh., *Meas.*, ii., 1, 75, "I will detest my selfe also, as well as *she*" | Field., *T. J.*, iii., 121, "Dost fancy I don't know that as well as *thee*?"

The word *like* is normally used with the dative, but on account of its signification being often identical with that of *as*, the nominative is sometimes found :—

Sh., *Rom.*, 1992 (iii., 5, 83), "And yet no man like *he* doth greeue my heart," evidently on account of the following verb, whose subject in a way *he* is ; compare, on the other hand, *ibid.*, 1754-6, "wert thou as young as I . . . doting like *me*, and like *me* banished" | R. Wintle, *A Regular Scandal*, 35, "Yes, if it was a sweet young girl . . . and not one like *I*".

### 59. (161) Examples with *than* :—

Chaucer, *L. G. W.* (B), 476, "To me ne fond I better noon than *ye*" | Sh., *Cor.*, iv., 5, 170, "but a greater soldier then *he*, you wot one" | *As*, i., 1, 172, "my soule . . . hates nothing more then *\*he*" (compare *Troil.*, ii., 3, 199; *Cymb.*, v., 3, 72, "then *we*" (obj.) (relat. attr.) |

Field., *T. J.*, i., 49, "My sister, though many years younger than \**me*, is at least old enough to be at the age of discretion" | *ibid.*, iii., 129, "you are younger than \**me*" | *ibid.*, i., 221 (vulg.), "gentle folks are but flesh and blood no more than *us* servants" | Byron, ii., 351, "none Can less have said or more have done Than \**thee*, Mazeppa" | *ibid.*, iv., 213, "Yet he seems mightier far than \**them*" | iv., 223, "Higher things than ye are slaves; and higher Than \**them* or ye would be so" | v., 226, "than \**him*" | Shelley, 237, "I am . . . mightier than \**thee*" | Thackeray, *Van. F.*, 412, "she fancies herself better than you and *me*" | Trollope, *Duke's Ch.*, i., 221 (a lady says), "[She should be] two inches shorter than *me*".

This use of the acc. after *than*, of which Bishop Lowth in his grammar (1762, p. 145) is already able to quote many examples from the writings of Swift, Lord Bolingbroke, Prior, etc., is now so universal as to be considered the normal construction; that is, to the general feeling *than* is a preposition as well as a conjunction. Even grammarians acknowledge the use of the accusative in this connexion,<sup>1</sup> though their reasons are not always of the best; thus W. Smith and D. Hall<sup>2</sup> mention: "A stone is heavy, and the

<sup>1</sup> Hyde Clarke, p. 132; Alford, *Queen's Engl.*, 111 ff.; see also Storm, *E. Philol.*, p. 233.

<sup>2</sup> *A School Manual of Engl. Grammar*, 1873, p. 119.

sand weighty ; but a fool's wrath is heavier than them both" (Prov., xxvii., 3), as "a construction founded on the Latin," namely, the ablative (without *quam*), to express the second member of a comparison (major Scipione), with which the English idiom has of course nothing whatever to do. Nevertheless, many grammarians, and consequently many authors, reject this natural use of the accusative, and I think I am justified in considering the nominatives in some, at least, of the following examples as called forth by a more or less artificial reaction against the natural tendencies of the language :—

Carlyle, *Heroes*, 93, "the care of Another than *he*"  
 | Troll, *Duke's Ch.*, i., 136, "he had known none more vile or more false than *I*" | G. Eliot, *Mill*, i., 186, "I have known much more highly-instructed persons than *he* make inferences quite as wide" | Tennyson, *Becket*, 1, "But we must have a mightier man than *he* for his successor" | Meredith, *Egoist*, 141, "if I could see you with a worthier than *I*"  
 | Buchanan, *Jew*, 87, "Naming the names of lesser Gods than *I*" | Co. Doyle, *Sherl. H.*, i., 53, "I love and am loved by a better man than *he*".

The accusative is always used in *than whom* (found in Shakespeare, *Love's L.*, iii., 180, in Milton, etc.); Alford is right in observing that *than who* is here excluded because the expression does not admit of an elliptical construction. I only once remember

having found *than who*, namely in the sentence, "Mr. Geo. Withers, than who no one has written more sensibly on this subject," and then it occurs in the book on *The King's English* (p. 338) by Mr. Washington Moon, who is constantly regulating his own and others' language by what in his view *ought* to be, rather than what really *is* the usage of the English nation.

### III. Anacoluthia.

60. (162) Of the different forms of anacoluthia we have here first to do with that which results when a speaker begins a sentence with some word which takes a prominent place in his thought, but has not yet made up his mind with regard to its syntactical connexion; if it is a word inflected in the cases he provisionally puts it in the nominative, but is then often obliged by an after-correction<sup>1</sup> to insert a pronoun indicating the case the word should have been in. This phenomenon is extremely frequent in the colloquial forms of all languages, but grammarians blame it and in literary language it is generally avoided. I shall first give some examples where the case employed is correct or the fault is at any rate not visible:—

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<sup>1</sup> I translate thus Wegener's expression, "nachträgliche correctur" (see his *Grundfragen des Sprachlebens*, Halle, 1885, p. 72, where he deals with such German sentences as "das haus, da bin ich rein gegangen," etc.). The opposite process of placing the pronoun first is also common; see, for instance, Carlyle, *Heroes*, 19, "it is strange enough this old Norse view of nature".



*Ancren Riwele*, 332, "þe beste mon of al þisse worlde ȝif ure Louerd demde him al efter rihtwisnesse 7 nout efter merci, wo schulde *him* iwurden" | Chauc., *B.*, 4268, "oon of hem, in sleping as he lay, *Him* mette a wonder dreem" | Sh., *As*, iv., 1, 77, "verie good orators when they are out, *they* will spit" | *ibid.*, iv., 1, 177, "that woman that cannot make her fault her husbands occasion, let *her* neuer nurse her childe".

Next I quote some instances in which the nominative (or, in the first sentence, acc.) might be also caused by relative attraction (§ 52).—

*Oros.*, 78, 31, "*þæt gewi:n þæt his fæder astealde he . . . for þæm V gear scipa worhte*" | *Cura P.*, 29, 2, "*Se ðe god ne ongit, ne ongit god hine*"<sup>1</sup> | *ibid.*, 31, 16, "*Se ðe ænigne ðissa ierminga besuicð, him wære betere,*" etc. | Chaucer, *B.*, 4621, "For *he* that winketh, whan he sholde see, Al wilfully, God lat *him* never thee!" | Chaucer, *Morris*, iii., 165, "for certes *he* that . . . hath to gret presumpcioun, *him* schal evyl bitide" | *ibid.*, iii., 196, "*He* that most curteysly comaundeth, to *him* men most obeyen" | Malory, 150, "*ye* that be soo wel borne a man . . ., there is no lady in the world to good for *yow*" |

<sup>1</sup> This is the regular O. E. construction in relative clauses: compare the modern translation, "*He* who knows not God, God knows not *him*".

Matt., xii., 36, "*Every idle word* that men speak, they shall give account *thereof* in the day of judgment" | Sh., *Cor.*, i., 4, 28, "*He* that retires, Ile take *him* for a Volce" (compare *Hamlet*, iii., 2, 252) | Sh., *R. III.*, iii., 2, 58, "that *they* which brought me in my masters hate, I liue to looke vpon *their* tragedie"<sup>1</sup> | Sh., *H. V.*, iv., 3, 35, "*he* which hath no stomacke to this fight, let *him* depart, his passport shall be made" | Carlyle, *Heroes*, 9, "*He* that can discern the loveliness of things, we call *him* Poet".

There is no relative attraction in the following sentences :—

*Oros.*, 24, 7, "*Seo ús fyrre Ispania, hyre* is be westan garsecg" | *ibid.*, 188, 26, "*Athium þæt folc him* gepuhte" | Sh., *Meas.*, v., 134, "But yesternight my lord, *she* and that fryer I saw *them* at the prison" | Sh., *Wint. T.*, iii., 2, 98, "My second ioy, And first fruits of my body, from *his* presence I am bar'd"<sup>1</sup>.

Sometimes no corrective pronoun follows :—

Sh., *Meas.*, v., 531, "*She* Claudio that you wrong'd, looke you restore" | Sh., *Wives*, iv., 4, 87, "and *he* my husband best of all affects" | Sh., *Tim.*, iv., 3, 39, "*Shee*, whom the spittle-house and vlcereous sores Would cast the

<sup>1</sup> In the appendix to the next chapter I shall have occasion to mention these and similar ways of expressing the genitive of word-groups; see especially § 147.

gorge at, this embalmes" [her; in the first folio a different punctuation is used] | R. Browning, *Tauchn.*, i., 235, "She, men would have to be your mother once, Old Gandolf envied me, so fair she was!"

**61.** (163) When two or more words are in *apposition* to each other it often happens that the appositum does not follow the case of the first word; the speaker forgets the case he has just employed and places the appositum loosely without any connexion with the preceding. M. Sohrauer<sup>1</sup> gives some O. E. examples (to *Nichodeme*, an ðæra Judeiscra ealdra), to which may be added:—

*Chron.*, 984 A, "seo halgung þæs æfterfilgendan bisceopes Ælfheages, se ðe oðran naman wæs geciged Godwine" (rel. attraction!) | Sweet, *A. S. Reader*, 15, 7, "fram Brytta cyninge, Ceadwalla geciged" | *ibid.*, l. 45, "sumne arawurðne bisceop, Aidan gehaten" | *ibid.*, l. 101, "to Westseaxan kyninge, Cynegyls gehaten" | *ibid.*, l. 144, "on scrine, of seolfre asmipod".

This is extremely common in O. E. with participles; in more recent periods it is found in many other cases as well:—

Chauc., *B.*, 1877, "prey eek for us, we sinful folk unstable" | Chauc., *M. P.*, 5, 421, "Beseching her of mercy and of grace, As she

<sup>1</sup> *Kleine Beiträge zur Altengl. Grammatik*, p. 29; see also Matzner, *Gramm.*, iii., 343 ff.

that is my lady sovereyne" | Chauc., *Morris*, iii., 12, 325, "to folwe *hire*, as *she* that is goddesse" | Sh., 1 *H. IV.*, i., 2, 16, "by *Phoebus*, *hee*, that wand'ring knight" | Sh., *Love's L.*, iv., 3, 7, "this loue . . . kils sheep; it kils *mee*, *I* a sheep" | Sh., *Wint. T.*, v., 1, 86, "Prince Florizell . . . with his princesse (*she* The fairest I haue yet beheld)" | Sh., 1 *H. IV.*, ii., 4, 114, "I am not yet of *Percies* mind, the *Hotspurre* of the North, *he* that killes me some sixe or seauen dozen of Scots"<sup>1</sup> | Shelley, *Poet. W.*, 250, "Know ye not *me*, The Titan? *he* who made his agony the barrier to your else all-conquering foe?"

Relative attraction may, of course, have also been at work in some of these sentences; and the following example (which I quote from A. Gil, *Logonomia*, 1619, p. 77) might be accounted for in no less than three of my paragraphs (52, 54, 61). This illustrates the complexity of the mutual relations of grammatical categories:—

"Sic etiam casus inter duo verba, nunc cum hoc,  
nunc *cum* illo construitur: vt, Let Tomas  
cum in, J men hi ðat kam yisterda: aut I  
men him".

What is the reason of the accusative in Sh., *Cymb.*, v., 4, 70, "we came, our parents and *vs* twaine"?

**62.** (164) There is a peculiar form of anacoluthia,

<sup>1</sup> Compare, for a fuller treatment of nominatives in apposition to genitives, § 120 ff. below.

which for want of a better name I shall term *unconnected subject*. In English this phenomenon is not confined to those exclamations of surprise or remonstrance in which it is common in many languages (Dan., "Du gore det! Han. i Paris?" French, "Toi faire ça! Lui avare?" Italian, "Io far questo!" Latin, "Mene incepto desistere victam?" etc.), but is found in other cases as well, especially after *and*, by which the subject is more or less loosely connected with a preceding sentence.<sup>1</sup> I shall here in the first place give some quotations in which the case employed is the same as would have been used had the thought been expressed fully and in more regular forms:—

Sh., *Love's L.*, iii., 191, "What? *I* loue! *I* sue! *I* seeke a wife!" | *ibid.*, 202, "And *I* to sigh for her, to watch for her," etc. | *Meas.*, ii., 2, 5, "all ages smack of this vice, and *he* To die for't" | *As*, iii., 2, 161, "Heauen would that shee these gifts should haue, and *I* to liue and die her slaue" (= *I* should) | *Tim.*, iii., 1, 50, "Is't possible the world should so much differ, And *we* aliue that liued?" | *Macb.*, i., 7, 58 (455), "If we should faile?—We faile!" (Here, however, the best reading seems to be "We faile." with a full stop, the verb being taken as an indicative) | *R.* II., iv., 1, 129, "And shall the figure of God's Maiestie . . . Be iudg'd by subiect, and in-

<sup>1</sup>The phenomenon was more frequent from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century than it is now.

ferior breathe, And *he* himself not present?"  
 | Milton, *S. A.*, 1480, "Much rather I  
 [Manoa] shall choose To live the poorest in  
 my tribe, than richest, And *he* in that cala-  
 mitous prison left" [= if Samson is left . . .]  
 | Field., *T. J.*, ii., 85, "*A young woman* of  
 your age, and unmarried, to talk of inclina-  
 tions!" | G. Eliot, *Mill*, ii., 149, "*I* say any-  
 thing disrespectful of Dr. Kenn? Heaven  
 forbid!" | *ibid.*, ii., 307, "Could anything be  
 more detestable? A girl so much indebted  
 to her friends . . . to lay designs of winning  
 a young man's affections away from her own  
 cousin?"

But in the following instances the *nom.* is used,  
 although the construction, if regularly completed,  
 would have led to the use of an accusative:—

Chaucer, *E.*, 105, "I dar the better aske of yow a  
 space Of audience to shewen our requeste,  
 And *ye*, my lord, to doon ryght as yow leste"  
 | Malory, 71, "hym thought no worship to  
 have a knyght at suche auaille, *he* to be on  
 horsback and *he* on foot" | Sh., *As*, i., 2,  
 279, "What he is indeede, More suites you  
 to conceiue, then *I* to speake of" (Kellner<sup>1</sup>  
 quotes from Sh. also *Err.*, i., 1, 33; *All's*,  
 ii., 1, 186; *Timon*, iv., 3, 266) | *Cor.*, iii., 2,  
 83, "the soft way which . . . Were fit for

<sup>1</sup> Introd. to *Blanchardyn*, p. lxvii. ff.; Kellner's explanation  
 does not seem very clear.

thee to vse, as *they* to clayme" (compare also *Cor.*, iii., 2, 124, and ii., 2, 54).

**63.** (165) Similarly where no infinitive is used, but a participle or some other word :—

[Chaucer, *F.*, 700, "What coude a sturdy husband more deuyse To preue hir wyfhood and hir stedfastnesse, And *he* continuing euer in sturdinesse?" ] | Mal., 95, "whan Balen sawe her lye so with the fowlest knyghte that euer he sawe and *she* a fair lady, thenne Balyn wente thurgh alle the chambers" | Marlowe, *Tamb.*, 244, "Me thinks I see kings kneeling at his feet, And *he* with frowning browes and fiery lookes Spurning their crownes" | Sh., *Romeo*, 537, "good manners shall lie all in one or two men's hands and *they* vnwaſht too" | *Lear*, iii., 6, 117, "that which makes me bend makes the king bow, *He* childed as *I* fathered!" | Field., *T. J.*, ii., 249, "I thought it hard that there should be so many of them, all upon one poore man, and *he* too in chains" | Meredith, *Trag. Com.*, 165, "let her be hunted and I not by [and let me not be by; when I am not by], beast it is with her" | Ward, *David Grieve*, iii., 133, "It made her mad to see their money chucked away to other people, and *they* getting no good of it".

In some of these sentences the construction might be called a kind of apposition; in others we have

something closely resembling the absolute participle, of which more will be said below, § 81; the use of an "unconnected subject" may have favoured the substitution of the modern "absolute nominative" for the old "absolute dative".

64. (166) Sometimes the phenomenon mentioned in § 62, of an unconnected subject with an infinitive, corresponds very nearly to the Latin accusative with the infinitive, only the nominative is used:—<sup>1</sup>

Malory, 40, "this is my counceill . . . that we lete puruey x knyȝtes men of good fame, & *they to kepe* this swerd" | *ibid.*, 60, "for it is better that we slee a coward than thorow a coward alle *we* to be slayne" | *ibid.*, 453 (quoted by Kellner), "*Thow* to lye by our moder is to muche shame for vs to suffre" | *ibid.*, 133, "And thenne hadde she me deuysed to be kyng in this land, and soo to regne, and *she* to be my quene".

But this use of a nominative with the infinitive does not occur often enough to be a permanent feature of the English language.

<sup>1</sup> Where the subject is a noun it is impossible to see which case is used; comp. *Ancr. R.*, 364, "is hit nu wisdom mon to don so wo him suluen?" | Malory, 67, "it is gods wyll youre body to be punysshed" | *ibid.*, 92, "it is the customme of my cuntrye a knyghte alweyes to kepe his wepen with hym" | Sh., *Wint. T.*, v., 142, "Which . . . Is all as monstrous . . . As my Antigonus to breake his graue". Modern Engl. here has *for*: "it is wisdom for a man to do . . ."; compare the full and able treatment of this use of *for*, in C. Stoffel's *Studies in English*, p. 49 ff.



IV. Influence from the Nouns.

**65.** (167) The absolute absence of any formal distinction between the nominative and the objective cases in the nouns and adjectives, as well as in the neuter pronouns *it*, *that*, and *what*, must of course do a great deal towards weakening the sense of case distinctions in general.

**66.** (168) This is especially seen to be the case where the pronouns are themselves taken substantively, for then the normal case-inflexion is naturally suspended. This happens in two ways: either a pronoun is plucked from its context and quoted by itself, as in these examples:—

Sh., *All's*, ii., 1, 81, "write to her a loue-line. What *her* is this?" | Tennyson, *Becket*, act i., sc. 1, "It much imports me I should know her name. What *her*? The woman that I followed hither" | *Frank Fairlegh*, ii., 19, "so he left her there. 'And who may *her* be?' inquired Freddy, setting grammar at defiance";

or else a pronoun is used exactly like a noun, *he* or *she* signifying a male or a female respectively. This is extremely common in Shakespeare (see Al. Schmidt's *Sh. Lex.*); a few examples will here suffice:—

Bale, *Three Lawes*, 1439, "I am non other, but even the very *he*" | Sh., *Tw. N.*, i., 5, 259, "Lady, you are the cruell'st *shee* alive" | *Wint. T.*, iv., 4, 360, "to load my *shee* with

knackes" | *As*, iii., 2, 10, "carue on euery tree The faire, the chaste and vnexpressiue *shee*" | *Love's L.*, v., 2, 469, "we . . . woo'd but the signe of *she*" | *Cymb.*, i., 3, 29, "the *shees* of Italy".

So also as the first part of a compound: *a she angel, you she knight errant* (*Sh.*, *Wint.*, iv., 4, 211; 2 *H. IV.*, v. 4, 25); comp.:—

Byron, v., 230, "The pardon'd slave of she Sardanapalus" | *ibid.*, v., 245, "wearing Lydian Omphale's She-garb".

But in the nineteenth century it is often the objective case that is used thus substantively:—

Troll., *Duke's Ch.*, i., 94, "that other *him* is the person she loves" | *ibid.*, 94, "reference to some *him*" | Gilbert, *Orig. Plays*, 1884, 129 (vulgar), "Mr. Fitz Partington shall introduce him.—It ain't a *him*, it's a *her*."

In philosophical language, the *me* and the *thee* are often used corresponding to the German *das ich*, *das du*:—

Carlyle, *Sartor*, 35, "Who am I; what is this ME?" | *ibid.*, 37, "our ME the only reality" | *ibid.*, 39, "that strange THEE of thine" | *ibid.*, 92, "a certain orthodox Anthromorphism connects my *Me* with all *Thees* in bond of Love" | Ruskin, *Selections*, i., 503, "But this poor miserable *Me*!" | Meredith, *Egoist*, 489, "the miserable little *me* to be taken up and loved after tearing myself to pieces!"

Yet the *nom.* is sometimes found :—

Carlyle, *Sartor*, 132, "the THOU" | Mrs. Ward, *Dav. Grieve*, iii., 86, "Was there any law—any knowledge—any *I*?" | L. Morris, *Poet. Works*, 121, "And the *I* is the giver of light, and without it the master must die".

An English friend of mine once told me about a clergyman who in one of his sermons spoke constantly of *your immortal I*, but was sadly misunderstood by the congregation, who did not see why the *eye* should be more immortal than any other part of the body. It is perhaps to avoid such misinterpretations that the Latin form is sometimes used, as in Thack., *Pend.*, iii., 363, "every man here has his secret *ego* likely".

**67.** (169) When the pronoun is preceded by an adjective, it is sometimes inflected in the usual way ("poor *I* had sent a hundred thousand pounds to America; would you kill poor *me*?" and similar examples are quoted by Storm, *E. Philol.*, 208, note); but in other places we find it treated like a substantive :—

Sh., *Sonn.* 72, "upon deceased *I*" | *ibid.*, *Cor.*, v., 3, 103, "to poore *we*, Thine enmities most capitall".

In exclamations *me* is always used :—

Sh., *Sonn.* 37, "then ten times happy *me*!" | Thack., *Van. F.*, 120, "Poor little *me*!"

Compare the use of *me* in other exclamations: *O(h) me!* *Woe me!* *Ah me!* *Ay me!* (Milt., *P. L.*, iv.,

86, etc.), *Aye me detested!* (Sh., *Tw. N.*, v., 142), *Alas me!* (Keats, *Eve of St. Agnes*, xii.), *Me miserable!* (Milt., *P. L.*, iv., 73), etc. The use of *me* in *dear me!* *gracious me!* and other apologies for oaths is probably due to the analogy of the corresponding use of the pronoun as an object after a verb, as in *bless me!* etc. So perhaps also in Shak., 1 *H. IV.*, ii., 3, 97, "*Gods me, my horse*".

### V. Position.

**68.** (170) Word-order is to no small extent instrumental in bringing about shiftings of the original relation between two cases. In Old English prose the subject is already placed before the verb in nearly every sentence; the exceptions are almost the same as in Modern German or Danish; thus inversion is the rule after adverbs such as *þa* (while, curiously enough, the subject precedes the verb where the clause is introduced by *hwæt þa* or *efne þa*). By-and-by these exceptions disappear or are reduced to a minimum, so that in Modern English the order, subject, verb, object, is practically invariable.<sup>1</sup> Cooper defines the difference between the nom. and the acc. in the pronouns in the following manner:<sup>2</sup> "*I, thou, he, she, we, ye, they*, verbis anteposuntur, *me, thee, him, her, us, you, them*, postposuntur verbis & præpositionibus". However naïve the grammarian may find this definition, it contains a

<sup>1</sup> Also in sentences like *Does he love her?* so far as the real verb is concerned.

<sup>2</sup> See his *Gramm. Linguae Anglicanae*, 1685, p. 121.

good deal of truth; this is the perception of the distinction between the two forms which in the popular instinct often overrides the older perception according to which the use of *I* and *me* was independent of position.

**69.** (171) *Before the verb* the nom. comes to be used in many cases where the acc. was required by the rules of the old language. Besides a few isolated instances, that may be more or less doubtful,<sup>1</sup> this is the case with *who*, as the natural position of this pronoun is always at the beginning of the sentence, the verb, as a rule, following immediately after it. For Middle English examples of *who* and *whom* see below, § 76; it would be an easy matter to find hundreds of examples from the Modern English period; I shall here print only a few selected from my own collections to supplement the numerous examples adduced by Storm (*Engl. Philol.*, 211 ff.):—

Marl., *Tamb.*, 4190, "*UWho* haue ye there, my Lordes?" | Greene, *Friar B.*, I, 143, "Espy her loves, and *who* she liketh best" | Sh., *Tw. N.*, ii., 5, 108, "Ioue knowes I loue, but *who*, Lips do not mooue, no man must know" | *ibid.*, *Wint.*, v., I, 109, "[she might] make proselytes of *who* she but bid follow" | *ibid.*, i., 2, 331, "my sonne (*who* I doe thinke is mine, and loue as mine)" | *Spectator*, No.

<sup>1</sup> See, for instance, Sh., *Meas.*, iii., I, 221, "*Shee* should this Angelo haue married: was affianced to her [by] oath, and the nuptiall appointed," where most editors emend *she* to *her*,

266, "*who* should I see there but the most artful procuress?" | *ibid.*, 59, "*who* should I see in the lid of it [a snuff-box] but the Doctor?" | Dryden, "Tell who loves *who*" | Sheridan, *Dram. W.*, 39, "*who* can he take after?" | *ibid.*, 48, "*who* can he mean by that?" (cf. *ibid.*, 69) | Thack., *Van. F.*, 74, "*Who*, I exclaimed, can we consult but Miss P.?" | Mrs. H. Ward, *Rob. Elsm.*, ii., 141 (Lady Helen says), "*Who* does this dreadful place belong to?"

**70.** (172) As regards Shakespeare's use of *who* in the objective case, it must suffice to refer to Al. Schmidt's *Lexicon*; under the interrogative pronoun he gives fifteen quotations for the use in question, and then adds an *etc.*, which, to any one familiar with the incomparable accuracy and completeness of Schmidt's work, is certain proof that examples abound; finally he names nineteen places where the old editions do not agree. Under the relative pronoun he adduces twelve quotations for *who* as an acc., followed again by an *etc.*, and by eleven references to passages in which the oldest editions give different readings. It is well worth noting that where such variations of reading are found it is nearly always the earliest edition that has *who* and the later editions that find fault with this and replace it by *whom*; most modern editors and reprinters add the *-m* everywhere in accordance with the rules of grammars, showing thereby that they hold in

greater awe the schoolmasters of their own childhood than the poet of all the ages.<sup>1</sup>

Shakespeare also uses *whoever* as an accusative; *whomever* does not occur in his works; he also sometimes uses *who* after a preposition (see Abbott, § 274, and add to his examples, *R. III.*, i, 3, 54), but this seems now obsolete, because the natural word-order is to place the preposition at the end of the sentence, as Shakespeare does himself in numerous passages; for instance, *As*, iii., 2, 327, "He tell you who Time ambles withall, who Time trots withall, who Time gallops withal, and who he stands stil withal". It seems, then, as if the last refuge of the form *whom* is the combination *than whom*, where it had originally nothing to do; but as this combination belongs more to literary than to everyday language, *who* is now to be considered almost as a common case; compare what Sweet writes to Storm: "I think many educated people never use *whom* at all; always *who*".

**71.** (173) A great many verbs which in Old English were impersonal have become personal in Modern English, and one of the causes which most contributed to this change was certainly word-order. The dative, indicating the person concerned, was

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<sup>1</sup> Schmidt has five instances from Shakespeare of *whom* (relative) for *who*: one is after *than*; three might be added to those I gave above in § 53; the fifth (*Temp.*, v., 76) is an anacoluthia, which was corrected by Rowe.

generally placed immediately before the impersonal verb; the reason of this position was undoubtedly the greater interest felt for the person, which caused the word indicating him to take a prominent place in the sentence as well as in the consciousness of the speaker. And so this "psychological subject," as it has been termed, eventually became the grammatical subject as well. But other circumstances favoured the same tendency. Some verbs in O. E. admitted of both a personal and impersonal construction, *e.g.*, *recan*, "to care"; compare from the thirteenth century the *Ancr. Riwle*, p. 104, where one MS. has " ; if heo beoð feor, *me* ne recched," and another " þach ha beon feor, naut *I* ne recche". In one case, two originally distinct verbs grew to be identical in pronunciation by a purely phonetic development, namely O. E. *hyncan*, "seem" (German *dunken*), impersonal, and *þencan*, "think" (Germ. *denken*), personal. In the former the vowel *y* by the usual process lost its lip-rounding and so became *i*; in the latter *e* was raised to *i* before the back nasal consonant, as in O. E. *s'reng*, Mod. *string*, O. E. *hlence*, mod. *link*, O. E. *Englaland*, Mod. *England*, pronounced with [i]; compare also the history of the words *mingle*, *wing*, *cringe*, *singe*, etc.

The number of verbs that have passed from the impersonal to the personal construction is too great for me here to name them all; I shall refer to the lists given by Koch, *Gram*, ii., § 109; Matzner, ii., p. 198 ff.; Einkenel, *Streifzüge*, p. 114 ff.; and Kellner, *Blanchardyn*, p. xivii. ff. But I shall supple-



ment the remarks of these scholars by attempting to analyse the psychological agencies at work in the transition ; I shall for this purpose print those examples from my own collection which seem to be the most illustrative, confining myself generally to only a few of the most usual verbs coming under this head.

72. (174) The original construction will be seen from the following quotations :—

*Ancr. R.*, 238, "*me luste* slepen" | *Chauc.*, *B.*, 1048, "*hir liste* nat to daunce" | *Bale*, *Three L.*, 1264, "And maye do what *him lust*" | *Ancr. R.*, 338, "hit mei lutel *liken* God [dative], and misliken ofte" | *Chauc.*, *M. P.*, 22, 63, "al that *hir list* and *lyketh*" | *ibid.*, *Morr.*, iii., 145, "whan *him liketh*" | *Malory*, 100, "I shold fynde yow a damoyssel . . . that shold *lyke yow & plesse yow*" [the two verbs are synonymous] | *Greene*, *Friar B.*, 4, 55, "this motion *likes me* well" | *Sh.*, *Ham.*, ii., 2, 80, "It *likes vs* well" | *ibid.*, *Troil.*, v., 2, 102, "I doe not like this fooling . . . But that that *likes* not *you pleases me* best" | *Milton*, *Reason of Church Governm.*, ii., "much better would it *like him* to be the messenger of gladness" | *Thack.*, *Van. F.*, 89, "Some [women] are made to scheme, and some to love: and I wish any respected bachelor . . . may take the sort that best *likes him*".<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Like* is here used in the old sense of *please*; this is now a-

Chauc., *M. P.*, 3, 276 (and very often), "*me mette* [I dreamt] so inly swete a sweven" | *Ancr. R.*, 136, "hit schal *punche þe swete*" | Chauc., *B.*, 4578, "*hem thoughte* hir herte breke" | Malory, 65 (four times), "*hymthoughte*" | Latimer (*Skeat's Spec.*, xxi., 91), "*me thynketh* I heare" | "*methinks, methought(s)*".

**73.** (175) In many cases it is impossible to decide whether the verb is used personally or impersonally, as, for example, when it stands with a noun or with one of the pronouns that do not distinguish cases. It goes without saying that the frequency of such combinations has largely assisted in bringing about the change to modern usage. A few examples will suffice:—

*Ancr. R.*, 286, "hwon *þe heorte likede* wel, þeonne cumed up a deuocioun" | Chauc., *Morr.*, iii., 147, "al that *hir housbonde likede* for to seye" | *ibid.*, *B.*, 477, "*God list* to shewe his wonderful miracle" | *ibid.*, *Morr.*, iii., 145, "hem *that liste* not to heere his wordes" | *ibid.*, *B.*, 4302, "how *Kenelm mette* a thing".

The construction is similarly not evident in the case of an accus. with the infinitive:—

days extremely rare. In Middle English *like* was often used with *to*: Chauc., *Morr.*, iii., 191, "what day that it like *you* and *unto* your noblesse" | *ibid.*, *E.*, 345, "It lyketh *to* your fader and *to me*". Compare Chauc., *Morr.*, iii., 172, "it displeth *to* the jugges," but 183, "displese God".

Chauc., *M. P.*, 5, 108, "That *made me to mete*"  
| *ibid.*, 115, "[thou] *madest me* this sweven  
*for to mete*".

74. (176) The transition to the new construction is shown by the possibility of joining two synonyms, of which one has always been a personal verb:—

*Prov. of Alfred* (*Specimens*, i., p. 148), "þat ye  
alle a-drede vre dryhten crist, *luuyen* hine  
and *lykyen*" | Malory, 35, "the kynge *lyked*  
and *loued* this lady wel".

As early as Chaucer we find passages in which a nominative is understood from an impersonally constructed verb to a following verb of personal construction:—

*B.*, 3731, "For drede of this, *him* thoughte that  
he deyde, And [he] ran into a gardin, him  
to hyde" | *M. P.*, 7, 200, "*her* liste him  
'dere herte' calle And [she] was so meek"  
| *M. P.*, 5, 165, "Yit lyketh *him* at the  
wrestling for to be, And [he] demeth yit  
wher he do bet or he".

Sometimes both constructions are used almost in a breath:—<sup>1</sup>

Ch., *L. G. W.*, 1985, "*me* is as wo For him as  
ever *I* was for any man" | Malory, 74,  
"Arthur lokod on the swerd, and *lyked*<sup>2</sup> it

<sup>1</sup> See also below, § 91.

<sup>2</sup> This and the just mentioned are the only examples of personal (or rather half-personal) use of *lyke* I have noted in Malory, who generally uses the acc. (dat.) with it, e.g., 61, "it lyketh you" | 157, "yf hit lyke yow".

passynge wel; whether *lyketh yow* better, said Merlyn, the suerd or the scaubard? *Me lyketh* better the swerd, sayd Arthur" | Greene, *Friar B.*, 6, 138, "Peggy, how *like you* [nom.] this?—What *likes my lord* is pleasing unto me" | Sh., *Troil.*, above, § 72.

In Ch., *M. P.*, 5, 114, "[thou] dauntest whom *thee* 'est," some of the manuscripts read *thou*, probably in order to avoid the two accusatives after each other.

75. (177) Sometimes the impersonal expression is followed by a connexion of words that is strictly appropriate only after a personal verb:—

*Ancr. R.*, 332, "Ase ofte ase ich am ischriuen, euer *me puncheð me* unschriuen (videor mihi non esse confessus)" | *ibid.*, 196, "swetest *him puncheð ham* [the nuns: they appear to him [God] most lovely]" | Chauc., *E.*, 106, "For certes, lord, so wel *us lyketh yow* And all your werk and ever han doon".

The last quotation is of especial interest as showing a sort of blending of no less than three constructions: the impersonal construction with *us lyketh* as a third personal sg. with no object, the old personal construction, where *like* means "to please," *us lyken ye*,<sup>1</sup> and finally the modern personal use, *we lyken yow*; the continuation "and ever han doon" (= "and we have always liked you") shows that the last construction was at least half present to Chaucer's mind.

<sup>1</sup> Not *us lyketh ye*, as Prof. Skeat would have it in his note to the passage.

Other blendings of a similar nature are found with *think*; *me thinks* and *I think* are confused in *me thinke*, found, for instance, in a sermon of Latimer's (*Skeat's Specimens*, xxi., 176);<sup>1</sup> *thinks thee?* and *thinkst thou?* give *thinkst thee?* in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, v., 2, 63 (folio; the old quartos have *thinke thee*; some modern editors write *thinks't thee*, as if contracted for *thinks it thee*; but this is hardly correct, as this verb is very seldom used with *it*, at least when a personal pronoun is added).

**76.** (178) Note particularly *who* in the following sentences:—

*Ancr. R.*, 38, "*hwo* se *punched* to longe lete þe psalmes" | Chauc., *B.*, 3509, "Hir batailes, *who* so *list* hem for to rede . . . Let him vnto my maister Petrark go" | Ch., *Troilus*, i., 398, "and *who-so liste* it here".

These we may consider either the oldest examples of *who* as an accusative (centuries before any hitherto pointed out), or else the oldest examples of O. E. *þyncan* and *lystan* used personally.<sup>2</sup> I suppose, how-

<sup>1</sup> Compare also *Roister Doister*, 71, "me thinke they make preparation . . . me think they dare not," where *thinke* seems to be in the plural on account of the following *they*.

<sup>2</sup> The Chaucer quotations given by Eikenel (*Streifzuge*, p. 115) are too dubious to prove the personal use of *listen*: iii., 1 (= F. 689), the Ellesm. MS. reads, "For he to vertu *listneth* not entende" [what is *entende* here? a noun? an adv.? (in the ende??). I understand it no more than did those scribes who placed *listeth* instead of *listneth*]; iv., 136, has *that*, which may as well be acc. as dat.; finally, ii., 268, proves nothing, as some

ever, that the correct way of viewing these sentences is to say that the two tendencies, neither of which was strong enough to operate by itself, here combined to bring about a visible result.

**77.** (179) Here I shall finally give a few examples of the prevailing personal use:—

Sh., *Rom.*, 37, "as *they list*" | Milton, *P. L.*, iv., 804, "as *he list*" | *Gesta Rom.* (ab. 1440, quoted by Kellner), "*bou shalt like it*" (in Elizabethan language also *like of*) | Greene, *Friar B.*, 10, 45, "if *thou please*" | Sh., *Shrew*, iv., 3, 70, "as *I please*"<sup>1</sup> | Chauc., *B.*, 3930, "And eek a sweuen vpon a nyghte *he mette*".

In some cases the personal construction has not become universal, as in the case of *ail* (O. E. *eglan*). Though Dr. Murray is able to show the personal use of the word in a quotation as early as 1425, and though Shakespeare never uses it impersonally (comp. also Marlowe, *Jew*, 1193, "What ayl'st thou"), the old construction still survives. The reason is undoubtedly the fact that the verb is so very often used in the

MSS. read "if *the list*," not *thou*. Kellner, *Blanchard.*, xlix., quotes Einkenel's two examples, showing that he has found no more examples in Chaucer, while he has some from Caxton. Compare, however, *M. P.*, 7, 200, quoted above, § 176.

<sup>1</sup> Milton, *P. L.*, vi., 351, shows the personal use of *please* and the impersonal use of *like*: "As *they please*, They limb themselves, and colour, shape, and size, Assume, as *likes them best*, condense or rare". Compare *ibid.*, vi., 717.

common formula : *What ails him ?* (her, etc.), where the personal pronoun is placed *after* the verb ; see, e.g., Sirith, 337 ; Chauc., *B.*, 1170, 1975, 4080 ; *H.*, 16 ; *M. P.*, 3, 449, etc., etc. ; Tennyson, p. 132 : " What ail'd *her* then ? " G. Eliot, *Mill*, i., 80, " there's nothing ails *her* ".

With *seem* the shifting observable in the case of *like*, etc., has not taken place, although there were formerly tendencies in this direction ; Kellner<sup>1</sup> gives two instances from old wills of the personal use (with the person to whom it seems, in the nom.), and in Somersetshire<sup>2</sup> *I zim* now means " it seems to me " exactly as the Danish *jeg synes*.<sup>3</sup> The following examples of a corresponding use I give with some diffidence :—

Malory, 76, " So whan the kyng was come thyder with all his baronage and lodged as *they semed* best " ; comp., on the other hand, *ibid.*, 77, " *me semeth* " | Spalding, *Eng. Lit.*, 358, " *we seem* often as if we were listening to an observant speaker ".

**78.** (180) I must here mention the history of some peculiar phrases. When the universal tendency to use impersonal expressions personally seized upon the idiom *me were liever* (or *me were as lief*), the

<sup>1</sup> *L. c.*, p. l. Kellner does not seem to be right in asserting that the O. E. verb means " think, believe ".

<sup>2</sup> Elworthy, *Word-book* (E.D.S.), p. 851.

Danish offers a great many parallels to the English development of personal constructions out of impersonal.

resulting personal construction came in contact with the synonymous phrase *I had liefer* (or *I had as lief*),<sup>1</sup> and a considerable amount of confusion arose in this as well as in the kindred combinations with *as good*, *better*, *best*, *rather*. I give some instances of the various constructions found, starring those in which the case employed seems to run counter to logic:—

*Oros.*, 220, 26, "*him leofre was þæt . . .*" | *Ancr. R.*, 230, "*ham was leoure uorte adrenchen ham sult þen uorte beren ham*" | *ibid.*, 242, "*asken þe hwat te were leouest*" | *Sirith*, 382, "*Me were levere then ani fe That he hevede enes leien bi me*" | *Chauc.*, *B.*, 1027, "*she hadde* [var. l. *\*Hire hadde*] *lever a knyf Thurghout hir brest, than ben a womman wikke*" | *ibid.*, *C.*, 760, "*if that you be so leef To fynde deeth*" [two MSS. *\*ye be*, others *to you be*] | *ibid.*, *E.*, 444, "*al had \*hir leuer haue born a knaue child*" | *Malory*, 87, "*he had leuer kyng Lotte had been slayne than kynge Arthur*" | *ibid.*, 92, "*I had leuer mete with that knyght*" | *Sh.*, *Cor.*, iv., 5, 186, "*I had as liue be a condemn'd man*".

*Chauc.*, *M. P.*, 5, 511, "*him were as good be stille*" | *ibid.*, 5, 571, "*yet were it bet for the Have hold thy pees*" | *Bale*, *Three L.*, 889, "*\*Thu were moch better to kepe thy pacience*" | *Udall*, *Roister*, 46, "*\*ye were best sir for a while to reuiue againe*" |

<sup>1</sup> He is dear to me = I have (hold) him dear.



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Marlowe, *Jew*, 1798, "*\*he were best* to send it" (cf. *ibid.*, 869, 1851, 1908) | Sh., *Meas.*, iii., 2, 38, "*\*he were as good* go a mile" | *ibid.*, *As*, iii., 3, 92, "*\*I were better* to bee married" | *ibid.*, *R. III.*, iv., 4, 337, "What *were \*I best* to say?" | *ibid.*, *Shrew*, v., 1, 108, "Then *\*thou wert best* saie that I am not Lucentio" | *ibid.*, *Cymb.*, iii., 6, 19, "*\*I were best* not call" | Milton, *S. A.*, 1061, "But *had we best* retire?" | Field., *T. Jones*, ii., 110, "Your La'ship *had almost as good* be alone" | Thack., *Pend.*, iii., 131, "*you had much best* not talk to him".

Marlowe, *Jew*, 147, "*Rather had I* a Jew be hated thus, Then pittied" | Sh., *R. II.*, iii., 3, 192, "*\*Me rather had*, my heart might feele your loue".<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Those who object to the form *had* in "*I had rather speak than be silent*," etc. (see for instance a letter from Robert Browning in Mrs. Orr's *Handbook*, 6th ed., p. 14), seem wrongly to take *rather* as an adverb instead of an adjective; it is incorrect to urge that the omission of the adverb would "alter into nonsense the verb it qualifies," for *had rather* is to be taken as a whole, governing the following infinitive. *Had rather* is used by the best authors, by Shakespeare at least some sixty times, while *would rather* is comparatively rare in his writings and generally confined to such cases as *Two Gent.*, v., 4, 34, "*I would haue beene a breakfast to the Beast, Rather then have false Protheus reskue me*," where, of course, *rather* belongs only indirectly to *would*. In an interesting paper, "Had Rather and Analogous Phrases," in the Dutch periodical *Taalstudie* (viii., 216), C. Stoffel shows that so far from

79. (181) I must here also mention the peculiarity of the English language by which not only what would be the direct object of the active verb but other parts of the sentence may be made the *subject of a passive verb*. As I have not collected sufficient materials to give an exhaustive treatment of this interesting subject, I shall confine myself to a few remarks. There can be little doubt that nouns were employed

*had rather* being an "incorrect graphic expansion" of *I'd rather* instead of *I would rather*, the *had* form historically is the better of the two. Stoffel is undoubtedly right in his conclusions; still it is interesting to notice how the feeling of the etymological connexion has been lost on account of the phonetic identity of the unstressed forms of *had* and *would* [əd]; the change in the popular instinct is already seen in Shakespeare's *Rich. III.* (iii., 7, 161), where the folio emends the *had rather* of the old quartos into *would rather*. A further step in the gradual forgetting of the old idiom is shown by the occasional introduction of *should*, as in Conan Doyle, *Adv. of Sherlock Holmes*, i. 228, "Or should you rather that I sent James off to bed?" Nor are signs wanting that in other cases as well as before *rather* the feeling of the difference between *had* and *would* has become obscured; I shall give two quotations, one from Tennyson's *Becket* (act iii., sc. 3), "You *had* safelier have slain an archbishop than a she-goat." and the other from a little Cockney, who writes, "If anybody else *had* have told me that, I wouldn't have beleevved it" (see *Original English, as Written by our Little Ones at School*, by H. J. Baker, Lond., 1889). A. Trollope writes (*Old Man's Love*, 263), "Had you remained here, and have taken me, I should certainly not have failed then," where, by a singular confusion, *had* seems first to have its proper meaning, and then to be taken as an equivalent of [əd] = *would*.

in this way as "free subjects" of passive verbs at an earlier time than pronouns in which the nom. and the acc. had distinct forms. I shall arrange my examples under four heads.<sup>1</sup>

(1) The verb originally governs the dative case, but has no direct object in the accusative. Such an instance as (*Ancren Riwe*, 82) *God beo iðoncked* is not quite beyond question, as the form *God* is used in that text in the dative as well as in the nominative; but the following is indubitable, as *Louerd* is not used as a dative:—<sup>2</sup>

*Ancr. R.*, 8, "vre Louerd beo iðoncked" |  
Chaucer, *L. G. W.*, 1984, "He shall be holpen" | *ibid.*, *Morr.*, iii., 11 (compare Einkenkel, 111), "I may be holpe" | Malory, 125, "he myght neuer be holpen" | *ibid.*, 36, "yours herte shalbe pleasyd" | *ibid.*, 463, "he was answerd".<sup>3</sup>

(2) The verb is combined with a preposition; then the word governed by the latter is considered as the object of the composite expression (verb and prep.), and can therefore be made the subject of a passive proposition.

Maundev., 22 (quoted by Koch), "Thei ben sent

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Koch, *Gram.*, ii., § 147 ff.

<sup>2</sup> The dative is *louerde*; see pp. 160, 168, also p. 58, where the MS. has *louerde* according to Kolbing, and not *louerd* as Morton prints it.

<sup>3</sup> This is given by Kellner (*Blanchard.*, lv.) as the only instance found in Malory.

fore" | Malory, 35, "we were sent for"; similarly, though with a noun as the subject *ibid.*, 47, twice, p. 67, p. 38, "lete hym be sent for" | Latimer, *Spec.*, iii., 21, 46, "they wyl not be yl spoken of" | *ibid.*, 251, "that whiche I can not leaue vnspoken of" | Sh., 1 *H. IV.*, iii., 2, 141, "your vnthought-of Harry" | *ibid.*, i., 2, 225, "Being wanted, he may be more wondred at" (see *ibid.*, i., 3, 154; iii., 2, 47; *R. II.*, i., 3, 155, etc.) | Meredith, *Trag. Com.*, 76, "The desire of her bosom was to be run away with in person".

Compare the somewhat analogous phenomenon in *Ancr. R.*, 6, "sum is old & atelich & is ðe leasse dred of" (*is dred of* is a sort of passive of *habben dred of*); here, however, we have rather a continuation of the old use of *of* as an adverb = "thereof".

(3) The verb governs both an accusative and a dative; in this case there is a growing tendency to make the dative the subject when the verb is made passive. The oldest examples are:—

*Ancr. R.*, 112, "he was þus iletē blod" | *ibid.*, 260, "swinkinde men & blod-letene" | *ibid.*, 258, "heo beoð iletē blod"; similarly, 262 (he), 422 (ge, twice).

It should, however, be remarked that *let blood*, more than most of these combinations, is felt as *one* notion, as is seen also by the participle being used attributively (p. 260) and by the verbal noun *blod-*

*lettunge* (14, 114). Something approaching the indirect passive construction is found in the following passage:—

*Ancr. R.*, 180, “ȝif *me*<sup>1</sup> *is* *iluued* more þen  
anoðer, & more *ioluhned*, more *idon* *god*,  
*oðer menske*,”

from which it would perhaps be rash to conclude that the author would have said, for instance, “*he is idon god oðer menske*,” if these expressions had not been preceded by the direct passives *iluued* (loved) and *ioluhned* (caressed). At any rate these constructions do not become frequent till much later; in Chaucer I have found only one instance (*L. G. W.*, 292, “And some were brend, and *some wer cut the hals*”); Matzner quotes one from the *Towneley Mysteries* (“alle my shepe are gone; *I am not left one*”); Kellner knows none in the whole of Caxton,<sup>2</sup> which may be explained by the fact that Caxton's translations closely follow the original French in most syntactical respects. For examples from Shakespeare and recent authors I may refer to Koch, ii., § 153, and Matzner, ii., p. 229. The following passage shows the vacillation found to a great extent even in our own century:—

Sh., *Macb.*, i., 5, 14-17 (305-308), “ignorant

<sup>1</sup> *Me* is the indefinite pronoun (*men, man*), corresponding to French *on*.

<sup>2</sup> The dative is used for instance in Malory, 89, “there was told *hym* the adventure of the swerd” | “therefore was *gyuen hym* the pryse”.

of what greatnesse *is promis'd thee* (in Macbeth's letter) . . . Glamys thou art, and Cawdor, and shalt be what *thou art promis'd*" (comp. *Wint. T.*, iv., 4, 237, "I was promis'd them").

To this category belongs also such a phrase as the following :—

Shak., *As*, i., 1, 128, "*I am giuen* sir secretly to vnderstand that your younger brother . . .".

(4) The verb beside a direct object has attached to it a preposition and a word governed properly by the preposition, but coming to be taken as the object of the composite expression, verb + object + preposition :—

"I was *taken no notice of*" | Carlyle, *Sartor*, 29, "new means must of necessity be *had recourse to*".

Here, too, I am able to point out a sentence in the *Ancren Riwe* containing, so to speak, a first germ of the construction :—

*Ancr. R.*, 362, "Nes Seinte Peter & Seinte Andreu istreih't o rode . . . and *loðleas meidenes þe tittes i'koruen of*, and to-hwiðered o hweoles, & hefdes bikoruen?"

**80.** (182) This extension of the passive construction is no doubt in the first place due to the effacement of the formal distinction between the dative and the accusative; but a second reason seems to be the same fact which we met with before in the case of verbs originally impersonal: the greater interest felt for the

person makes the speaker place the noun or pronoun by which the person is indicated before the direct object, as in the sentence: "He gave the girl a gold watch". This makes it natural that in the passive voice the dative should be placed at the very beginning of the sentence: "The girl was given a gold watch". But this position immediately before the verb is generally reserved for the subject; so *the girl*, though originally a dative, comes to be looked upon as a nominative, and instead of "*her* was given a gold watch," we say, "*she* was given a gold watch". On the other hand, the nature of these constructions reacts on the feeling for case-distinctions in general; for when "I was taught grammar at school" comes to mean the same thing as "me was taught grammar," or "she was told" as "her was told," etc., there is one inducement the more to use the two cases indiscriminately in other sentences as well, or at least to distinguish them in a different way from that which prevailed in the old language.

81. (183) No doubt the position before the verb has also been instrumental in changing the old *absolute dative* (as seen, for instance, in *Chron.*, 797, "*Gode fultomiendum*, God helping") into the modern nominative.

A few instances will show that the modern construction was fully established in Shakespeare's time:—<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See also Mätzner, iii., 75 ff.; Koch, ii., 130 ff. I have not had access to Ross's dissertation, *The Absolute Participle in Middle and Modern English* (Johns Hopkins Univ., 1893).

Sh., *Venus*, 1019, "For *he* being dead, with him is beauty slain" | *ibid.*, *Cymb.*, ii., 4, 8, "*they* [the hopes] fayling, I must die" | *ibid.*, iii., 5, 64, "*Shee* being downe, I haue the placing of the British crowne" | *ibid.*, *Temp.*, v., 1, 28, "*they* being penitent, the sole drift of my purport doth extend Not a frowne further" | *ibid.*, *Cor.*, v., 4, 37, "and *he* returning to breake our necks, they respect not vs" | *ibid.*, *R. III.*, iv., 2, 104, "How chance the prophet could not at that time Haue told me, *I* being by, that I should kill him" | *ibid.*, *Errors*, iii., 2, 87, "not that *I* beeing a beast she would haue me".

Gill, in his *Logonomia*, 1619, p. 69, mentions the modern construction only, showing thereby that the old one was completely forgotten at that time, even by learned men:—

"Nominatiuus absolutus apud Anglos ita vsurpatur, vti apud Latinos Ablatiuus: vt I bñing prezent, hi durst not have dun it. . . . Hi bñing in trubl, hiz frindz forsük him."

We are, therefore, astonished to find Milton using the old dative towards the end of that century:—

*P. L.*, ix., 130, "and *him* destroyed . . . all this will soon follow" | *ibid.*, vii., 142, "by whose aid This inaccessible high strength, the seat of Deity supreme, *us* dispossessed, He trusted to have seized" | *Sams.*, 463, "Dagon hath presumed'd, *Me* overthrown, to enter lists with God".



But this peculiar use of Milton's is undoubtedly due rather to an imitation of Latin syntax than to a survival of the Old English construction, and Milton in other places employs the nominative :—

*P. L.*, ix., 312, "while shame, *thou* looking on . . . Would utmost vigour raise" | *ibid.*, ix., 884, "Lest, *thou* not tasting, different degree Disjoin us".

I have already mentioned that the phenomenon I termed "unconnected subject" may have contributed something towards the growth of the absolute nominative, see § 63; I shall here call attention to another circumstance that may have favoured this construction, namely, that in such sentences as the following an apposition (in the nominative) is practically not to be distinguished from the absolute construction :—

Field., *Tom Jones*, ii., 42, "The lovers stood both silent and trembling, *Sophia being* unable to withdraw her hand from Jones, and *he* almost as unable to hold it" | C. Doyle, *Sherl. Holmes*, i., 36, "they separated, *he driving* back to the Temple, and *she* to own house".

It is true that these sentences are modern and penned long after the absolute nom. had been settled; but although I have no old quotations ready to hand, similar expressions may and must have occurred at any time.

**82.** (184) Having dealt (in §§ 68-81) with the substitution of the nominative for an original accusa-

tive or dative before the verb, we shall now proceed to the corresponding tendency to use an objective case *after the verb* where a nominative would be used in the old language. This is, of course, due to the preponderance of the instances in which the word immediately following the verb is its object.<sup>1</sup> The most important outcome of this tendency is the use of *me* after *it is*. I have already had occasion to mention a few connexions in which the accusative will naturally come to be used after *it is* (see §§ 52 and 55); to these might be added accusatives with the infinitive, as in Greene, *Friar Bacon*, 10, 57, "*Let it be me*". But even where there is no inducement of that kind to use *me*, this form will occur after *it is* by the same linguistic process that has led in Danish to the exclusive use of *det er mig*, where some centuries ago the regular expression would have been *det er jeg*, and which is seen also in the French *c'est*, used in Old French with the oblique form of nouns and then also of pronouns, *c'est moi*, etc.<sup>2</sup>

With regard to the English development from O. E., *ic hit eom*, through the Chaucerian *it am I* (*Cant.*, B., 1109, *M. P.*, 3, 186, etc.) to *it is I*<sup>3</sup> and *it is me*, I shall refer to a letter from A. J. Ellis, printed in

<sup>1</sup> When Trollope writes (*Duke's Ch.*, ii., 227), "There might be somebody, though I think not *her*," *her* is viewed as a sort of object of "I think".

<sup>2</sup> On the French development see, for instance, Lidforss in *Öfversikt af Filologiska selskapets i Lund Förhandlingar*, 1881 83 p. 15.

<sup>3</sup> Malory, 36, "I am he".

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Alford's *The Queen's English*, p. 115, and to Storm, *Engl. Philol.*, 1881, pp. 209-10, 234 ff.; the latter author gives a great many modern examples of the accusative in familiar speech. Ellis goes so far as to say that "the phrase *it is I* is a modernism, or rather a grammaticism, that is, it was never in popular use, but was introduced solely on some grammatical hypothesis as to having the same case before and after the verb *is*. . . . The conclusion seems to be that *it's me* is good English, and *it's I* is a mistaken purism." The eminent author of *Early English Pronunciation* is no doubt right in defending *it's me* as the natural form against the blames of quasi-grammarians: but I am not so sure that he is right when he thinks that *it is I* is due only "to the theories of schoolmasters, and that "it does not appear to have been consonant with the feelings of Teutonic tribes to use the nominative of the personal pronouns as a predicate". He seems to have overlooked that it was formerly used so often with the nom. that we cannot ascribe the usage exclusively to the rules of theorists; see, for instance:—

Chaucer, *B.*, 1054, "it was *she*" | Malory, 38, "it was *I* myself that cam" | *Roister Doister*, 21, "that shall not be *I*" | *ibid.*, 58, "it was *I* that did offende" | *ibid.*, 26, "this is not *she*" | Marlowe, *Jew*, 656, "'tis *I*" | Shak., *Macb.*, 877, 1009, 1014 (and at other places), "it was *he*," or "'tis *hee*".

**83.** (185) The nom. accordingly seems to have been the natural idiom, just as *det er jeg* was in

Danish a few centuries ago, and as *det ar jag* is still in Sweden; but now it is otherwise, and *it is me* must be reckoned good English, just as *det er mig* is good Danish. In Shakespeare (besides the passages accounted for above) we find the accusative used in three passages, and it is well worth noting that two of them are pronounced by vulgar people, *viz.*, *Two Gent.*, ii., 3, 25, "the dogge is *me*" (the clown Launce), and *Lear*, i., 4, 204, "I would not be *thee*" (the fool; comp. *Perucl.*, ii., 1, 68, "here's *them* in our country of Greece gets more," spoken by the fisherman); the third time it is the angry Timon who says: "[I am proud] that I am not *thee*" (iv., 3, 277). The stamp of vulgarity would have disappeared completely by now from the expression had it not been for grammar schools and school grammars; even to the most refined speakers *it's me* is certainly more natural than *it's I*.<sup>1</sup> And Shelley has consecrated the construction as serviceable in the highest poetic style by writing in his *Ode to the West Wind*: "Be thou, spirit fierce, my spirit! *Be thou me*, impetuous one!"

Latham, Ellis, Sweet and Alford defend *it is me* as the only natural expression; the reason of their not extending this recognition of the objective case equally to the other persons will be found below

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<sup>1</sup> Trollope makes a young lord say: "I wish it were me" (*Duke's Childr.*, iii., 118); comp. *ibid.*, ii., 64, "It is you. . . . 'Me!' said Miss Boncassen, choosing to be ungrammatical in order that he might be more absurd." Many other examples in Storm.

(§ 92), yet in Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*, p. 163, a young lady says *It's her*; and in *Cambridge Trifles*, p. 96, an undergraduate says *It couldn't be them*—to mention only two examples.

**84.** (186) Not only the predicate but also the subject itself is liable to be put in the accusative after the verb. *Shall's* (= *shall us*) for *shall we* is found six times in Shakespeare. As four times it means exactly or nearly the same thing as *let us* (*Cor.*, iv., 6, 148, "Shal's to the Capitoll"; *Wint.*, i., 2, 178; *Cymb.*, v., 5, 228; *Pericl.*, iv., 5, 7), it is probable that this idiom is originally due to a blending of *let us* and *shall we* (compare the corresponding use of a nom. after *let*, § 54). But it has been extended to other cases as well: *Tim.*, iv., 3, 408, "How shal's get it?" | *Cymb.*, iv., 2, 233, "Where shall's lay him?" Towards the end of the last century *shall us* was common in vulgar speech according to Sam. Pegge,<sup>1</sup> who adds:

<sup>1</sup> See his *Anecdotes of the Engl. Language* (1803; re-edited 1814 and 1844, with additions by the editors; Pegge himself died in 1800). This is a very remarkable work, excellent alike for the power of observation it displays and for the author's explanations of linguistic phenomena, by which he is often many years ahead of his time, and often reminds one of that eminent philologist who was to take up the rational study of vulgar English about eighty years later: Johan Storm. Of course, it is no disparagement to Pegge to remark that many of the phenomena he deals with are now explained otherwise than was possible to him, before the birth of comparative philology. I shall here quote an interesting remark of his: "Before I undertook this investigation, I was not aware that *we all speak so incorrectly* in our daily colloquial language as we do". This

"The Londoner also will say—"Can us," "May us," and "Have us". Storm quotes (p. 209) from Dickens some instances of vulgar *shall us, can't us, do us, hadn't us*; is this phenomenon still living in the mouth of uneducated people? I do not call to mind a single instance from the Cockney literature of the last ten years or so.

85. (187) I find a further trace of the influence of position in Shakespeare, *Macb.*, 2044 (v., 8, 34), "And *damn'd be him*<sup>1</sup> that first cries hold, enough!" *Damn'd be* is here taken as one whole meaning the same thing as, and therefore governing the same case as, *damn* or *God damn*. The person that should properly be the subject of the verb is sometimes even governed by a *to* :—

Field., *T. Jones*, i., 297, "Are not you ashamed, and *be d—n'd to you*, to fall two of you upon one?" | *ibid.*, ii., 118, "*be d—ned to you*" | *ibid.*, iv., 87, "You my son-in-law, and *be d—n'd to you!*" | Thack., *Van. F.*, 158, "*be hanged to them*"; similarly, *ibid.*, 274, 450; *Pendennis*, ii., 146, 314, 317<sup>2</sup> | Darwin, *Life and Lett.*, iii., 76, "I went to

will no doubt express the sentiment of every serious student of any living language; but does it not suggest a doubt as to the truth of most current ideas of what constitutes correctness in language?

<sup>1</sup> Of course, Pope and most later editors "emend" *him* into *he*.

<sup>2</sup> *Pendennis*, ii., 321, "Field of honour be hanged!"

Lubbock's, partly in hopes of seeing you,  
and, *be hanged to you*, you were not there"  
| Mrs Ward, *D. Grieve*, i, 220, "*be d—d*  
to your Christian brotherhood!"

Here the phrase *be damned*, or its substitute *be hanged*, has become an exclamation, and *to you* is added as if "I say" was understood; compare also *Hail to thee* (Middle Engl. *heil be þow*); *farewell to you*; *welcome to you*; *good-bye to you*.<sup>1</sup>

An earlier form of the phrase *Would to God* is *Would God*, where *God* is the subject:—

Chaucer, *M. P.*, 3, 814, "God wolde I coude clepe her wers" | Malory, 66, "so wold god I had another" [hors] | *ibid.*, 81, "wolde god she had not comen in to thys courte" | Greene, *Friar B.*, 6, 40, "would God the lovely earl had that".

But when people lost the habit of placing a subject after the verb, they came to take *would* as an equivalent of *I would* and *God* as a dative; and the analogy of the corresponding phrase *I wish to God* (or, I pray to God) would of course facilitate the change of *God* into *to God*.

**86.** (188) The position after the verb has probably had no small share in rendering the use of *thee* (and *you*) so frequent *after an imperative*, especially in the

<sup>1</sup> *Hamlet*, ii., 2, 575, qu.; this phrase properly contains two *yous*; compare also Stevenson, *Tr. Isl.*, 256, "I've got my piece o' news, and *thanky to him* for that" (*thanky* = thank ye, thank you).

first Modern English period, the usage is still seen in the poetical phrase "*Fare thee well*". Here we have, however, a concurrent influence in the use of a reflexive pronoun (without the addition of *self*) which was extremely common in all the early periods of the language, and which did not perceptibly alter the meaning of the verb to which it was added.<sup>1</sup> This reflexive pronoun was sometimes originally added in the accusative case, *e.g.*, after *restan* (see Voges, p. 333), but generally in the dative; this distinction, however, had obviously no significance for any but the very earliest stages of the language. As now it made no difference whatever whether the speaker said *I fear* or *I fear me* (compare, for instance, Marlowe, *Jew*, 876, with 1110), the imperative would be indifferently *fear* or *fear thee* (*fear yow*);<sup>2</sup> but it was equally possible with the same meaning to say *fear thou* (*fear ye*), with the usual addition of the nominative of the pronoun to indicate the subject. Examples from Malory of the latter combination: 73, "go ye" | 74, "telle thow" | 75, "doubte ye not," etc. etc.<sup>3</sup> In other words: *after an imperative a nominative and an accusative would*

<sup>1</sup> See Voges, *Der reflexive dativ im Englischen*, in *Anglia*, vi., 1883, p. 317, ff. To supplement my own collections, I take the liberty of using those of his numerous quotations which seem best suited to illustrate the process of case-shifting, a subject which Voges deals with only in a cursory manner.

<sup>2</sup> Chaucer, *L. G. W.*, 1742, "dreed thee noght" | Malory 61 and 85, "drede yow not".

<sup>3</sup> Sometimes both cases are used in the same sentence: "Slep thou the anon" (Judas, quoted by Voges, 336).



*very often be used indiscriminately.* Thus, *Care ye not* (Malory, 72) means exactly the same thing as *care not yow* (*ibid.*, 135); *stay thou* (Sh., *Cæs.*, v., 5, 44) = *stay thee* (3 *H. VI.*, iii., 2, 58); *get ye gon* (Marlowe, *Jew*, 1226) = *get you gone* (common, Sh.); *stand thou forth* (Sh., *All*, v., 3, 35) = *stand thee by* (*Ado*, iv., 1, 24); *turn ye* unto him (Isaiah, xxxvi., 6; Ezek., xxxiii., 11) = *turn you*, at my reproof (Prov., i., 23); *turn you* to the stronghold, *ye* prisoners of hope (Zech., ix., 12); *turn thee* unto me (Ps., xxv., 16) = *turn thou* unto me (*ibid.*, lxix., 16<sup>1</sup>); *fare ye well* (Sh., *Merch.*, i., 1, 58 and 103) = *fare you well* (*ibid.*, ii., 7, 73), seldom as in *Tim.*, i., 1, 164, *Well fare you, fare thou well* (*Temp.*, v., 318) = *fartheewell* (*Tw. N.*, iii., 4, 183); *far-thee-well* (*ibid.*, iii., 4, 236); *far thee well* (*ibid.*, iv., 2, 61); *sit thou* by my bedde (Sh., 2 *H. IV.*, iv., 5, 182) = *sit thee* downe vpon this flowry bed (*Mids. N.*, iv., 1, 1; also with the transitive verb *set thee down*, *Love's L.*, iv., 3, 4, in some editions emended into *sit*!).

**87.** (189) It will now be easily understood that *thee* (or *you*) would be frequently added to imperatives where the thought of a reflexive pronoun would not be very appropriate; in *hear thee, hark thee, look thee* and similar cases, Voges finds a reflexive dative,

<sup>1</sup> The quotations from the Bible are taken from Washington Moon's *Ecclesiastical English*, p. 170; this author blames the translators for their inconsistency and for their bad grammar; he does not know that Shakespeare is guilty of the very same "faults," and he does not suspect the historical reason of the phenomenon.

whereas Al. Schmidt quotes them under the heading "*thee* for *thou*"; it is rather difficult to draw a line here. When Troilus says (act iv., 5, 115): "Hector, thou sleep'st, *awake thee*," no less than three grammatical explanations are applicable: *awake* may be intransitive, and *thee* the subject (Al. Schmidt), *awake* is intransitive, but *thee* is a reflexive dative (Voges, *l. c.*, p. 372), and finally, *awake* may be a transitive verb having *thee* as its object (comp. Murray's Dict.); but whichever way the grammatical construction is explained, the meaning remains the same.<sup>1</sup>

It is evident that all this must have contributed very much to impair the feeling of the case-distinction, and it should be remarked that we have here a *cause of confusion that is peculiar to the pronouns of the second person*.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> We may perhaps be allowed to conclude from the following passage that *you* after an imperative was at the time of Shakespeare felt as an accusative: As, i., 3, 45, "Mist'ris, dispatch you with your safest haste, And get you from our court. *Me Vncle?*"

<sup>2</sup> When in Living English a pronoun is added to an imperative, it is generally placed before it: "*You* try! *You* take that chair!" | "Never *you* mind!" | C. Doyle, *Sherl. H.*, i., 63, "And now, Mr. Wilson, off *you* go at scratch" | Jerome, *Three Men in a Boat*, 30, "Now, *you* get a bit of paper and write down, J., and *you* get the grocery catalogue, George, and *somebody* give me a bit of pencil". When the auxiliary *do* is used, the pronoun comes before the principal verb: "*Don't you* stir!" | C. Doyle, *l. c.*, 94, "I shall stand behind the crate, and *do you* conceal yourselves behind those" | *ibid.*, ii., 71, "*Don't you* dare to meddle with my affairs". Compare from

**88.** (190) In connexion with the reflexive expressions mentioned just now I shall remind the reader that we have a still more radical change in the case of the *reflexive pronoun when joined to self*. *Him self* was originally added to the verb with the meaning of a dative, "to, or for, himself"; but it came to be regarded as an emphatic apposition to the subject (he has done it *himself*; he *himself* has done it), and finally it is sometimes used as a subject by itself (*himself* has done it). We see the first beginnings of this development in Old English phrases like these:—

*Oros.*, 194, 21, "þa angeat Hannibal, & *him self* sæde"<sup>1</sup> | *ibid.*, 260, 33, "[Nero] gestod *him self* on þæm hiehstan torre" | *Ancr. R.*, 226, "3e beoð tures *ou sult*, 'ye yourselves are towers'" | *ibid.*, 258, "*he him sult* hit seið".

It would be a waste of paper and ink to give examples from more recent times, as they abound everywhere; I shall therefore only state the fact that in the modern use of *himself* and *themselves* (and

last century Fielding, *T. Jones*, iv., 131, "Well then," said Jones, "*do you* leave me at present" | *ibid.*, 157, "*Do you* be a good girl" | *ibid.*, 302, "Harkee, sir, *do you* find out the letter which your mother sent me". It will be seen that in this deviation from the position rules of former times we have an application of the rule laid down in § 68.

<sup>1</sup> For this can hardly mean at this place: "he said to himself"; the Latin original has: "Tunc Annibal dixisse fertur".

*herself*?) we have a dative used as a nominative (or rather as a common case), and that this was formerly the case with *me self* and *us self* (or *us selue*, *seluen*) as well, which have now been ousted by *myself* and *ourselves*.<sup>1</sup>

**89.** (191) Sometimes we come across isolated uses of the objective for the nominative case, which are probably to be ascribed to analogical influence exercised by the *self*-combinations. Abbott quotes (§ 214):—

Sh., *John*, iv., 2, 50, "Your safety, for the which my selfe and *them* Bend their best studies"; and says: "Perhaps *them* is attracted by myself," which naturally suggests the objective "myself and (they) them (selves)". That this is the correct explanation seems to be rendered more likely by the parallel passage:—

Marl., *Tamb.*, 433, "Thy selfe and *them* shall neuer part from me,"

and perhaps it is also applicable to these two sentences:—

Sh., *Wint.*, i., 2, 410, "Or both your selfe and *me*

---

<sup>1</sup> It is with some hesitation that I place this use of *him* (*self*) in the section headed "Position," as it neither is nor ever was obligatory to place *himself* after the verb. As this position is, however, the most common, it may have had some influence in determining the form *himself* in preference to *he self*, which was used in O E, and at any rate the arrangement followed in this section has the advantage of not sundering the two classes of reflexive datives.

Cry lost" | *Cæs.*, i., 3, 76, "No mightier then thy selfe, or *me*" [N.B., than !].

**90.** (192) In his book *The King's English*, p. viii., Mr. Washington Moon writes:—

"As a specimen of real 'Queen's English,' take the following, which was found written in the second Queen Mary's Bible: 'This book was given the king and *I* at our coronation'".

How is this *I* to be explained? Of course it might be referred to the passive constructions treated above, § 79, though then we should have expected *were* instead of *was* and a different word-order ("The king and I were given this book," or perhaps, "This book the king and I were given"). But I believe that another explanation is possible: *I* was preferred to *me* after *and*, because the group of words *you and I*, *he and I*, etc., in which this particular word-order was required by common politeness, would occur in everyday speech so frequently as to make it practically a sort of stock phrase taken as a whole, the last word of which was therefore not inflected. At all events, it cannot fail to strike one in reading Storm's instances of nominative instead of objective case (*Engl. Philol.*, p. 210 f.) that the great majority of sentences in which *I* stands for *me* present these combinations (seventeen from Shakespeare,<sup>1</sup> Ben Jonson, Bunyan, Dickens, etc., against two, which are moreover hardly genuine). Abbott says: "'Tween *you and I* seems to

<sup>1</sup> Some of these, it is true, may be explained on the principle mentioned in § 54

have been a regular Elizabethan idiom". It is found for instance in *Merch.*, iii., 2, 321, and is not yet extinct. I subjoin a few examples to supplement those given by Storm :—

(*Tom Brown*, 3, see § 54) | Goldsmith, *Mist. of a Night*, i., "Won't you give *papa and I* a little of your company?" | S. Pegge, *Anecd.*, 307, "To *you and I*, Sir, who have seen half a hundred years, it is refunding".

It will be seen that, if my explanation is the correct one, we have here an influence of word-position of quite a different order from that pointed out in the rest of this section. Dr. Sweet,<sup>1</sup> while accepting this explanation as far as the Elizabethan idiom is concerned, thinks that when *between you and I* or *he saw John and I* is said now-a-days, it is due to the grammatical reaction against the vulgar use of *me* for *I*.

## VI. Phonetic Influences.

**91.** (193) I now come to the last but by no means the least important of the agencies that have brought about changes in the original relations between the cases of the pronouns. I mean the influence of sound upon sense

If you glance at the list of pronominal forms printed in § 50 you will see that six of them rhyme together, the nominatives *we*, *ye*, *he*, *she*, and the accusatives *me*, *thee*. After the old case-rules had been shaken in different ways, instinctive feeling

<sup>1</sup> See *New Engl. Grammar*, p. 340 f.

seized upon this similarity, and likeness in form has partly led to likeness in function.

As evidence of this tendency I shall first mention Malory's use of the impersonal verbs that in his times were ceasing to have an impersonal and adopting a personal construction (§ 71 ff.). Malory has a manifest predilection for the *e*-forms with these verbs without any regard to their original case-values. I note all the instances found in some hundred pages:—

Malory, 115, "now *me* lacketh an hors" | 127, "*ye* shalle lacke none" | | 71, 90, 148, "*me* lyst(e)" | 61, 114, 146, "*ye* lyst" | | 76, "*ye* nede not to pulle half so hard" | 115, "*ye* shalle not nede" | | 153, "*he* shalle repente . . . *me* sore repenteth" | 59, 82, 83, 84, 96, 106, 107, 117, 133, "*me* repenteth" | 78, 80, "*ye* shalle repente hit" | 117, "*ye* ouȝt sore to repente it" | 79, 82, 118, "*me* forthynketh" (= "I repent") | | 121, "it were *me* leuer" | 46, "*ye* were better for to stynte" | 62, "*ye* were better to gyue" | 87, "whether is *me* better to treat" | 69, "that is *me* loth" | 90, "that were *me* loth to doo" | 100, "*he* wylle be lothe to returne" | 105, "*we* wolde be loth to haue adoo with yow" | 115, "*he* is ful loth to do wronge".

The following are the only exceptions:—

131, "though *I* lacke wepen, *I* shalle lacke no worship" | 101, "*hym* nedeth none" | 82, "els wold *I* haue ben lothe" | 112, 131, "*I* am loth".<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Thynke* and *lyke* are always impersonal in Malory; cf. above, § 74.

A century later the same holds good with the verb *lust* in *Roister Doister*: *ye* (pp. 12 and 51), *me* (12), *he* (42), *she* (87); there are two exceptions: *hym* (43), *I* (44).

The phonetic similarity is used to mark the contrast in Sh., *Macb.*, iii., 4, 14 (1035), "'Tis better thee without then he within"; see W. A. Wright's note: "It [Banquo's blood] is better outside thee than inside him. In spite of the defective grammar, this must be the meaning."

**92.** (194) We now see the reason why *me* is very often used as a nominative even by educated speakers, who in the same positions would never think of using *him* or *her*. Thus after *it is*, see above, § 83, and compare the following utterances:—

LATHAM (see Alford, p. 115): "the present writer . . . finds nothing worse in it [*it is me*] than a Frenchman finds in *c'est moi*. . . . At the same time it must be observed that the expression *it is me* = *it is I*, will not justify the use of *it is him*, *it is her* = *it is he*, and *it is she*. *Me*, *ye*, *you* are what may be called *indifferent forms*, i.e., nominative as much as accusative, and accusative as much as nominative."

ELLIS (*ibid.*): "*it's me* is good English".

ALFORD: "'It is me' . . . is an expression which every one uses. Grammarians (of the smaller order) protest: schoolmasters (of the lower kind) prohibit and chastise;



but English men, women and children go on saying it."

SWEET (*Words, Log. and Gr.*, 26): "it is only the influence of ignorant grammarians that prevents such phrases as 'it is me' from being adopted into the written language, and acknowledged in the grammars. . . . The real difference between 'I' and 'me' is that 'I' is an inseparable prefix used to form finite verbs [also a 'suffix': am I, etc.], while 'me' is an independent or absolute pronoun, which can be used without a verb to follow. These distinctions are carried out in vulgar English as strictly as in French, where the distinction between the conjoint 'je' and the absolute 'moi' is rigidly enforced."

SWEET (*Primer of Spoken Engl.*, 36): "The nom. *I* is only used in immediate agreement with a verb; when used absolutely, *me* is substituted for it by the formal analogy of *he*, *we*, *she*, which are used absolutely as well as dependently: *it's he*, *it's me*; *who's there?* *me*".

93. (195) I shall give here a few quotations to show the parallelism of *me* and *he* as unconnected subjects (see § 62):—

Thack., *Pend.*, ii., 325, "Why the devil are you to be rolling in riches, and *me* to have none? Why should you have a house and

a table covered with plate, and *me* be in a garret?" | Black, *Princess of Thule*, ii., 89, "What do you think of a man who would give up his best gun to you, even though you couldn't shoot a bit, and *he* particularly proud of his shooting?" | *ibid.*, ii., 141, "I am not going to be talked out of my common-sense, and *me* on my death-bed!"<sup>1</sup>

The common answer which was formerly always *Not I!* (thus in Shakespeare, see Al. Schmidt, *Sh. Lex.*, p. 565 a, bottom of the page) is now often heard as *Not me!* while the corresponding form in the third person does not seem to be *Not him!* even in vulgar speech, but always *Not he!* At least, I find in the Cockney Stories, *Thanks awf'ly*, London, 1890, p. 82, "Not 'e!"<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Compare Thack., *Pend.*, i., 295, "'*Me* again at Oxbridge, Pen thought, 'after such a humiliation as that!'" Flügel quotes in his Dictionary, Sterne's *Sent. Journ.*, 314: "my pen governs me, not *me* my pen".

<sup>2</sup> To avoid the natural use of *me*, stamped as incorrect in the schools, and the unnatural use of *I* standing alone, English people add a superfluous verb more frequently than other nations in such sentences as: "he is older than *I am*". Mr. G. C. Moore Smith writes to me: "I do not feel convinced that there is a difference between the vulgar (or natural) English, 'It's me—it's him'; 'not me—and not him'. I think the chief reason of *him* being less common is that while *me* is distinctive, in the third person it is generally necessary to mention the name. It seems to me very familiar English, 'Is he goin'? Not *him*.' Of course such usages may differ in different parts of the country."

**94.** (196) *Me* thus to a certain extent has become a common case under the influence of *he*, etc., and we find some traces of a development in the same direction beginning in the case of the other pronouns in *e*, only that it is here the nominative that has been generalised:—

Sh., *Wives*, iii., 2, 26, "There is such a league betweene my goodman and *he*" | *Wint. T.*, ii., 3, 6, "But *shee* I can hooke to me" (compare § 162 f.) | *Oth.*, iv., 2, 3, "You haue seene Cassio and *she* together" | (*Love's L.*, iv., 2, 30, "Those parts that doe fructifie in vs more then *he*" = in him) | Fielding, *T. Jones*, i., 200 (Squire Western), "It will do'n [do him] no harm with *he*" | *ibid.*, ii., 50 (*idem*), "Between your nephew and *she*" | Cowper, *John Gilpin*, "On horseback after *we*" | (? *Art. Ward, his Book*, 95, "I've promist *she* whose name shall be nameless . . .").

P. Greenwood, *Grammatica Anglicana*,<sup>1</sup> mentions among errors committed by plerosque haud mediocri eruditione præditos: "He spake it to *shee* whose fountaines is dried up," and he adds: "Non mirum si vulgus barbare omnino loquatur, cum qui docti, et sunt, et habentur, tam inscite, et impure scribunt".

**95.** (197) Phonetic influences may have been at

<sup>1</sup> This is the oldest English grammar (printed at Cambridge, 1594); on the title-page are the initials P. G.; I give the author's name from a written note in the unique copy belonging to the British Museum.

work in various other ways. If the vowel of the nominative *þu* was weakened when the word was unstressed the result would be *þe* [ðə], exactly like a weakened form of the accusative *þe*. This is, I take it, the explanation of the nominative *þe* found so often in the *Ayenbite of Inwit* (A.D. 1340) in such combinations as *þe wylt*, *þe miȝt*, *þe sooldest*. As *u* is undoubtedly weakened into *e* in *Huannes comste*, "whence comest thou" (*Ayenb.*, 268), as *te* stands certainly for *þu* in Robert of Gloucester, 10792 *seiste*, 3150 *woste*, 4917 *ȝifst' us*,<sup>1</sup> and as similarly *to* is weakened into *te* in the *Ayenbite* as well as in (parts at least of) the *Ancren Riwle*, this phonetic explanation seems to me, as it did to Mätzner,<sup>2</sup> more probable than the two other explanations given by Gummere<sup>3</sup> and Morris.<sup>4</sup>

As, however, this use of *þe* for *þu* is only found in a few texts (also in Sir Beues of Hamtoun, see *Engl. Studien*, xix., 264), we cannot ascribe to it any great influence on the later development

**96.** (198) Similarly a *þu* pronounced with weak

<sup>1</sup> F. Pabst, *Anglia*, lxxv., 1905, p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> *Sprachproben*, ii., 70.

<sup>3</sup> *American Journal of Philology*, iv., 286; according to him *þe* is here a dative that has become a nominative, as some centuries later *you* became a nominative.

<sup>4</sup> *þe* is a reflexive dative with the subject understood; this is also the view of Voges (*ibid.*, 235 ff.), who is then not able to offer any acceptable explanation of the reflexive dative being used in this text with quite other classes of verbs than elsewhere.

sentence-stress will be reduced to *ye* or even to the short vowel *ɪ*, written *y*. This is especially the case in stock phrases like *thank you* (*thanky*), *God be with you* (*Good-bye*;<sup>1</sup> the *oo*-vowel is probably introduced from the other forms of salutation: *good-morrow*, *good-night*, etc., the naming of *God* being thus avoided; in Shakespeare it is also written *God buy you*), *God give you good even* (in Shakespeare *Godgigoden*, *Godigoden*, *God dig you den*). *Harky* (*hark'ee*) and *look'ee* may contain *ye*, weakened for *you* (§ 86), or the nominative *ye*. I am inclined to think that this phonetic weakening of *you* is the cause of the unstressed *ye* after verbs, which is found so very frequently from the beginning of the sixteenth century, although it is impossible in each single instance to distinguish the *ye* which originates in this way from *ye*'s called forth by the other circumstances dealt with in this chapter.

**97.** (199) Further, we have here to take into account the elision of a final unstressed vowel before a word beginning with a vowel, which was formerly extremely common in English. As early as the thirteenth century we find in Orm *þarrke* for *þe arrke*, *tunnderrgan* for *to unnderrgan*;<sup>2</sup> in Chaucer the phenomenon is very frequent indeed: *sitt(e) on hors*, *t(o) entende*, *m(e) endyte*, etc.;<sup>3</sup> in more recent

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Skeat, *Principles of Engl. Etymology*, i., 423.

<sup>2</sup> See Kluge in Paul's *Grundriss*, i., 885. Comp. also Old English contractions: *b(e)æftan*, *b(e)ufan*, *b(e)ulan*, *n(eh)abban*, etc., Sievers, *Agss. Gr.*, § 110 n.

<sup>3</sup> See Ten Brink, *Chaucers Sprache*, § 269.

periods too you will often find *thold* written for *the old*, and so on. In the Elizabethan period there is plenty of evidence to show that elisions of this kind were of everyday occurrence. The phonetician Hart mentions them expressly, and in his *Orthographie* (1569) he constantly writes, *e.g.*, *ðon* (the one), *ðuðer* (the other), *ð' -ius* (the use), *t' ani man* (to any man), *t' iuz* (to use), *d' understand* (do understand), *tu b' aspi'rd* (to be aspired; the dot as a mark of a long vowel is in Hart under the *i*), *houb' it* (how be it), *ð' iuz* (they use), etc. And everybody who is at all familiar with Shakespeare or his contemporaries will know that this elision was in those times of very frequent occurrence, and was very often indicated in the old editions where the modern editors do not choose to mark it. The words *don* for *do on*, *doff* for *do off*, *dup* for *do up*, show the same tendency, and *do* is also curtailed in the formula *much good do it you*, of which the pronunciations "*muskiditti*" and "*mychgoditio*" are expressly mentioned.<sup>1</sup> Similarly where the following word begins with an *h*: *he has* became *has*, written in the old editions *has*, *h'as* or *ha's* (see, for instance, *Tw. N.*, v., 178, 201, 293; *Cor.*, iii., 1, 161, 162); so also *he had* became *h'had* (so

<sup>1</sup> See Ellis, *Early Engl. Pronunciation*, i., 165; and iii., 744. Prof. Skeat explains Shak., *Tim.*, i., 2, 73, "Much good dich thy good heart," by the frequent use of this *d(o)it* before *ye* and *you*; the *t* was there naturally palatalised and assibilated and as the phrase was taken as an unanalysed whole, the *ch* sound was introduced before *thee* as well; see *Transact. Philol. Soc.*, 1885-7, p. 095.

Marlowe, *Jew*, 25) ; *they have* became *th' haue* (*Cor.*, i., 2, 30). Now this elision seems to have disappeared from all forms of the language except (the artificially archaic language of the poets and) vulgar speech. In the Cockney Stories, *Thanks awf'ly*, I find among others the following instances :—

*the* : th'air, th'ether (other), th'id (head), etc. |  
*to* : t'enlearn, t'animels | *my* : m'arm | *so* :  
 s'help me | *you* (ye) : ee y'are (here you  
 are), w'ere y'are (where . . .). y'observe,  
 the mowst crool menner y'ivver see.

98. (200) It will be noticed that these phonetic tendencies cannot possibly have had any influence on the case-relations of most pronouns ; weaken the vowel of *me* as you like or drop it altogether, the remaining *m* is not brought one bit the nearer to the nom. *I*. But in the pronouns of the second person there is this peculiarity, that the cases are distinguished by the vowel only ; if the vowel is left out it becomes impossible to tell whether the nominative or the accusative is meant—one more reason for the old distinction to become forgotten.

In Chaucer *thee* is elided, see *Cant T, B.*, 1660, *in thalighte*. In Greene's *Friar Bacon*, 12, 78, "For ere thou hast fitted all things for her state," we must certainly read *th'ast* (see also the same play, 13, 37). In countless passages, where modern editions of Shakespeare read *you're* the old folio has *y'are*, which must no doubt be interpreted *ye are*. But when we find *th'art* (for instance, *Cor.*, iv., 5, 17 and 100, mod.

edd. *thou'rt*), is this to be explained as *thou art* (*thu art*) or as *thee art*? Similarly *th'hast* (mod. edd. *thou'st*), *th'hadst* (mod. edd. *thou hadst*); in *Mach.*, iv., 1, 62 (1312), "Say if th'hadst rather heare it from our mouthes," it is specially difficult to decide in favour of one or the other form on account of the peculiar constructions of *had rather* (see above, § 180).

99. (201) There is one more thing to be noticed. Where the pronouns are combined with the verbal forms commencing with *w*, those forms are preferred that contain rounded vowels. The past subjunctive of *y'are* is in Shakespeare *you're* (*Cymb.*, iii., 2, 76, "Madam, you're best consider"); the second person, corresponding to *I'le* for *I will*, is not *ye'le*,<sup>1</sup> but *you'le* (Marlowe, *Jew*, 708), or more frequently *you'll*. Now I take it to be highly probable that these forms were heard in the spoken language at a much earlier period than they are recorded in literature, that is, at a time when *you* was not yet used as a nom., and that they are contracted not from *you were*, *you will*, but from *ye were*, *ye will* (? *ye wol*), the vowel *u* being thus a representative of the *w* of the verb.<sup>2</sup> If this is so,

<sup>1</sup>According to Al. Schmidt's *Lexicon*, *ye'le* is found only once, in the first quarto of *Love's L.*, i., 2, 54, where, however, the second quarto and the folios have *you'll*.

<sup>2</sup>Prof. Herm. Møller, in his review of my Danish edition, accepts this theory, and explains the phonetic connexion somewhat more explicitly than I had done. I beg leave to translate his words: "The vowel *ē* of *ye* combined with the following



we have here yet another reason for the confusion of *ye* and *you*, as the contracted forms *you'll* and *you're* would be felt instinctively as compounds of *you* and *will* or *were*. For *thou wert* we find *thou'rt*; <sup>1</sup> for *thou wilt* similarly *thou'lt* (e.g., Marl., *Jew*, 1144; often in Shakespeare, who also, though rarely, writes *thou't*).

**100.** (202) We have not yet finished our consideration of those phonetic peculiarities which favour the case-shifting of the pronouns of the second person. The pronouns in question were pronounced by Chaucer and his contemporaries as follows:—

<i>nom.</i>	ðu·	je·
<i>acc.</i>	ðe·	ju·

Side by side with the long vowel forms we must suppose the existence of shortened forms whenever the pronouns were unstressed or half-stressed; we should accordingly write ðu(·) and ju(·) with wavering vowel quantity. A regular phonetic development of

consonantal *u* or *w* to form the diphthong *iu*. This group of sounds (which might in those times be written *iu*, *iū*, *eu*, *eū*, *u*, etc.) was at a later period changed into *ju* (*juw*), the accent being here, as in the Norse diphthong, shifted from the first on to the second element, which was lengthened; the consonant *y* + *iu*, too, could give no other result than *ju* (*juu*), written in the case before us *you*."

<sup>1</sup>The Shakespearian difference between *thou'rt* and *th'art* (as well as that between *y'are* and *you're*) is totally obscured in modern editions, which give *thou'rt*, *you're* indiscriminately. It is true that *thou'rt* = *thou art* is found in the original editions of some of Shakespeare's plays. *Thou'rt* stands perhaps for *thee wert* in *Temp.*, 11. 2, 367: "and be quicke thou'rt best".

these pronunciations would have given the following modern forms (compare mod. *cow* [kau], in Chaucerian English pronounced [ku], etc.):—

<i>nom.</i>	ðau, †ðu	ji· (ji)
<i>acc.</i>	ði· (ði)	†jau, ju

Now it will be noticed that the forms marked with a cross are no longer heard, but their former existence is directly evidenced by the works of the old phoneticians. Bullokar (*Booke at large for the Amendment of Orthographie*, 1580, and *Æsopus*, 1585) always, even when the word is emphatic, writes *thu* with a diacritical stroke under the *u*, meaning the short [u] sound; the same sign is used in *full*, *suffer*, *thumb*, *luck*, *but*, *us*, *put*, etc., all of which were then pronounced with the vowel which has been preserved in the present-day pronunciation of *full*.<sup>1</sup> The spelling *thu* is by no means rare in the sixteenth century; it is used consistently, for instance, by Bale. On the other hand, the following passage in Gil's *Logonomia* (1621, p. 41) shows that a pronunciation of *you* rhyming with *how* and *now* was found in his times; it should be noticed that Gil writes phonetically, that *ou* is found in his book in such words as *hou*, *out*, etc., and that *u* denotes long [u] (as in Germ. *du*, or perhaps as in Mod. Engl. *do*; Ellis transcribes it *uu*):—

“Observe, primo *you*] sic scribi solere, et ab aliquibus pronunciari; at a plerisque *yu*: tamen

<sup>1</sup> It is accordingly not correct when Ellis, iii. 902, gives Bullokar as an authority for the pronunciation [dhuu] with long *u*.

quia hoc nondum vbique obtinuit, paulisper  
in medio relinquetur".<sup>1</sup>

It is in accord with this that in *Roister Doister* (printed 1566) *you* rhymes with *thou* (pp. 31 and 32), with *now* (pp. 15, 43, 48, 53, 60, 63 and 70), and with *inowe* (p. 18).

Now the [au] form of *you* is extinct; the current pronunciation [ju:] or [juw] must be due to a natural lengthening of the originally unstressed form [ju], when it was used with stress.<sup>2</sup> The existence of the form [ju.] at the time of Shakespeare may be concluded from the pun in *Love's Labour*, v., 1, 60.

**101.** (203) In *thou*, on the other hand, it is the fuller form with [au] that is now heard solely: this

<sup>1</sup> On p. 44, in the scheme of pronominal forms, Gil writes *yow*, but elsewhere in his phonetic transcriptions he regularly writes *yu*.

<sup>2</sup> Herm. Möller (*l. c.*, p. 308) explains the modern pronunciation [ju:, juw] differently; it is according to him the regular West-Saxon continuation of O. E. *eow*, in First Middle Engl. *éw*, *éu*, which became first *iū* and at last *jū*, just as O. E. *iū*, *eow*, Middle Engl. *éw*, *éu* becomes mod. *yew*; the lengthening of *u* in the group *iū* cannot have taken place till after the long *u* in *hus*, *cu*, etc., had been diphthongised into *ou* [au]. Mod. Engl. *you* therefore is a combination of the spoken form belonging to the South-west, and the written form belonging to the North and East and denoting properly the pronunciation [jau]. Prof. Möller's explanation and mine do not exclude one another: each accounts for the rise of the prevailing pronunciation in one province, and the concurrence of the two identical though independently developed forms would contribute largely to the rejection of the pronunciation [jau]

is quite natural because the word is now never found in colloquial language, so that only the emphatic pronunciation of solemn or ceremonial speech has survived. But when the two pronouns *thou* and *you* were used *pari passu* in ordinary conversation, their sounds were alike; *you* and *thou* formed correct rhymes, exactly as *thee* and *ye* did.<sup>1</sup> But to the formal likeness corresponded a functional unlikeness: *you* is not the same case as *thou*, but as *thee*, and *ye* has the same case-function as *thou*. Are not these cross-associations between sound and sense likely to have exerted some influence on the mutual relations of the forms?

**102.** (204) This supposition becomes the more probable when it is remembered that the pronouns of the second person are different from the other pronouns in that the singular and plural are synonymous. *I* and *we* cannot be used in the same signification, except in the case of the "royal" and "editorial" *we*, but the plural *ye, you* begins very early to be used as a courteous form of addressing a single person. The use of these two manners of address in the Middle English and Early Modern English periods has been treated so exhaustively by Skeat, Abbott, Al. Schmidt, and other scholars, that I need only sum up the chief results of their investigations: The use of

<sup>1</sup> The feeling of *you* and *thou* as parallel forms is manifest in the rhymed dialogue in *Rosier Doister*, p. 31. "I would take a gay riche husbände, and I were *you*.— In good sooth, Madge, e'en so would I, if I were *thou*."

## CHAPTERS ON ENGLISH

the singular and the plural pronouns from Chaucer's times till Shakespeare's, and even till about the middle of the last century (*The Spectator*, Fielding), corresponded pretty nearly to that of the French *tu* and *vous* ; but it was looser, as very frequently one person addressed the same other person now with *thou* and now with *ye*, according as the mood or the tone of the conversation changed ever so little. This will be seen in many passages quoted by the scholars just named ; compare also :—

Malory, 94, " Fair lady, why haue *ye* broken my promyse, for *thow* promysest me to mete me here by none, and I maye curse *the* that euer *ye* gaf me this swerd" | Sh., 1 *H. IV.*, ii., 3, 99, " Do *ye* not loue me? Do *ye* not indeed? Well, do not then. For since *you* loue me not I will not loue my selfe. Do *you* not loue me? Nay, tell me, if *thou* speak'st in iest or no."

When matters stand thus, and when the feeling for case-distinctions is shaken in a multiplicity of ways, must not countless confusions and blendings take place in ordinary careless conversation? The speaker begins to pronounce a *ye*, but, half-way through, he falls into the more familiar manner of address, and thus he brings about the compromise *you*, which is accordingly in many instances to be considered a sort of cross between *ye* and *thou* ; *you* = *y(e)* + (*th*)*ou*. Such blendings of two synonyms, where the resulting word consists of the begining of none and the end of

the other word, are by no means rare in language; Shakespeare has *reouse* = *rebu*(ke) + (a)*buse* (*Shrew*, i., 2, 7), and Tennyson: *be dang'd* = *da*(mned) + (h)*anged* (*Works*, p. 618); but the nearest parallel to our case, that I know of, is the Scottish pronoun *thon* = *th*(at) + (y)*on* (see Murray, *Dial. South. Counties*, p. 186), where in two synonymous pronouns the very same two sounds are interchanged as in the case before us.<sup>1</sup> In *you* there are, as we have seen, many more inducements at work,<sup>2</sup> which all of them concur in causing the cross to be rapidly recognised and accepted by everybody.

**103.** (205) If I am not mistaken, then, *thou* had some share in the rise of the *you* nominative: and I find a corroboration of this theory in the fact that, as far as I know, the earliest known instances of *you* as a nominative (fifteenth century) are found in addressing single individuals. This is the case of the four certain instances pointed out by Zupitza in the *Romance of Guy of Warwick*,<sup>3</sup> where *you* is not yet

<sup>1</sup> An evident blending is seen in *Roister Doister*. 76, "What sayst *you*?" In the same play I find an interesting piece of evidence of the extent to which the feeling for the cases was already weakened; the same sentence in a letter is once read aloud with *ye* (p. 51), and another time with *you* (p. 57): "to take *you* as *ye* (*you*) are".

<sup>2</sup> To those mentioned in the text might be added the influence of the possessive *your*, the vowel of which form would naturally favour *you* and not *ye*.

<sup>3</sup> Namely, ll. 4192, 7053, 7217-8 (where *thou* is used in the lines immediately preceding), and 9847. Prof. Zupitza's fifth

found as a nom. plural. Some of the old grammarians expressly make this distinction :—

Wallis (1653, p. 87): "Notandum item apud nos morem obtinuisse (sicut apud Gallos aliosque nunc dierum) dum quis alium alloquitur, singularem licèt, numerum tamen pluralem adhibendi; verum tunc *you* dicitur, non *yee*".

Cooper (1685, p. 122): "Pro *thou*, *thee*, et *ye* dicimus *you* in communi sermone, nisi emphaticè, fastidiosè, vel blandè dicimus *thou*".

So, p. 139 :—

<i>Sum</i>	<i>es</i>	<i>est . . .</i>	<i>estis . . .</i>
I am	} thou art } you are	he is	<i>ye</i> are

**104.** (206) But that distinction could not remain stable; even before the utterances just quoted were written, *you* had in the spoken language found its way to the nominative plural; Latimer (1549) uses *you* in addressing those whom he has just called *ye lords*, and Shakespeare and Marlowe use *you* and *ye* indiscriminately without any distinction of case or number. If any difference is made it is that of using *you* in emphasis, and *ye* as an unstressed form (comp. above, § 95).

example seems to me to be doubtful: "Y prey yow here A [MS. And] gode counsell þat *yow* lere" (l. 6352); it appears more natural to take *lere* = doceat and *yow* as the object. The four certain instances are interesting, in so far as *you* is in all of them found after the verb, cf. above, § 82 ff., in the last of them after *hyt were* and after a *but*, which may have had some influence, cf. § 56.

Marl., *Tamb.*, 3988, "*you, ye slaves*" | 687, "*you* will not sell it, will *ye*?"

See also Abbott, who gives some instances of the use of *you* and *ye* being sometimes the directly opposite of the original case one, *e.g.*,

*Cæs.*, iii., 1, 157, "I do beseech *ye*, if *you* beare me hard".

In some of the last plays Shakespeare wrote, *you* is practically the only form used,<sup>1</sup> and not long after his death *ye* must be considered completely extinct in spoken Standard English.<sup>2</sup> But *ye* is not entirely forgotten; the Bible and the old literature keep up the memory of it, and cause it to be felt as a form belonging to a more solemn and poetic sphere than the prosaic *you*. The consequence is that many poets make constant use of *ye* in preference to *you*. While in ordinary language the paradigm is:—

nom. sg. *you*  
acc. sg. *you*  
nom. pl. *you*  
acc. pl. *you*,

<sup>1</sup> As there is a marked difference in the frequency of *ye* and *you* in Shakespeare's plays (and perhaps also in the use of the contracted forms *th'art*, *thou'rt*, etc.), I once thought it possible to supplement the already existing tests, metrical and others, by which the chronology of his writings is determined, with a *you*-test; but want of time prevented me from undertaking the necessary statistical investigations—which might, after all, have led to no results of any value.

<sup>2</sup> If Thackeray's representation of the dialect spoken by the Irish is to be trusted, *ye* seems to belong to their everyday language



in Byron's *Cain* (to take a poetical work at random) everything is so entirely different that, to look only at this pronoun, one would scarcely believe it to be the same language :—

nom. sg. *thou*

acc. sg. *thee*

nom. pl. *ye*

acc. pl. *ye*.

*You* is practically non-existent in that work ; I find it only on p. 252 (*Works*, ed. Tauchnitz, vol. iv.), “ And *you, ye* new And scarce-born mortals,” and p. 224, where it is used in the indefinite signification of the French *on*.

The old *ye* has yet another refuge, namely, in grammars, where it renders the separate plural forms of other languages, Latin *vos*, German *Ihr*, etc. If this small domain is excepted, the English seem never to feel any inconvenience from their language having the same form for the singular and the plural in this pronoun ; if a separate form is now and then required for distinction's sake the want is easily remedied—after the Chinese fashion, as it were—by the addition of some noun : *you people, you gentlemen, you girls, you chaps, you fellows*, etc.

105. (207) To return to the original singular of the second person. As an early instance of vacillation between *thou* and *thee* I shall mention :—

Chauc., *A. B. C.* (= *M. P.*, 1), 107, “ O tresorere  
of bounte to mankynde, *The* whom God ches  
to moder for humblesse ! ”

where the *the* is probably caused by relative attraction; but one MS. has *yee*, and another *pou*.<sup>1</sup> The double reading *thou* (Ellesm. MS.) and *thee* in :—

Chauc., *H.*, 40, "Fy, stinking swyn, fy ! foule mot  
*thee* falle !"

is, I take it, owing to a vacillation between the personal and impersonal constructions.

In the Elizabethan literature *thee* is not rare as a nominative, though it is on the other hand far less frequent than *you* ; we have already seen the explanation of some instances of *thee*, among others 2 *H. VI.*, i., 2, 69, "Here's none but thee and I," where *thee* is placed side by side with *I* ; *Hamlet*, v., 2, 63, "Thinkst thee" ; and several instances of *thee* after *it is*. But these explanations do not hold good in the following quotations :—

Marlowe, *Jew*, 1056, "What hast *thee* done?"  
| Sh., 1 *H. IV.*, i., 2, 127, "How agrees the  
diuell and *thee* about thy soule, that *thou*  
soldest him?" | Dryden, *Poems*, ii., 220,  
"Scotland and *Thee* did each in other live"

<sup>1</sup> In some passages of the old authors *thee* and *yee* may have been confounded on account of the þ-letter, which has often been mistaken for a y, especially in the article (*Roister Doister*, 23, "What is *ye* matter?"). This is perhaps the explanation of Chaucer, *E.*, 508, "Ne I (ne) desyre no thing for to haue, Ne drede for to lese, saue only *ye*," where two MSS. have "*thee* vel *yee*," two *ye* and three *thee*. As Grisildis generally addresses her husband as *ye*, not *thou*, *ye* is probably the correct reading, and then the sentence comes under the category dealt with in § 57.

| Lewis Morris, *Poet. Works*, 74, "What I  
worship is not wholly *thee*".

**106.** (208) Here we have really a *thee* nominative, and this nominative is also often found where the use of the old singular pronoun is in living use, irrespective of literary or ecclesiastical tradition. Thus *thee* has ousted *thou* in most of those dialects where *you* has not become the only form used ; see, for instance, Elworthy, *Grammar of West Somerset*, p. 35 ; Lowsley, *Berkshire Words and Phrases*, p. 6 ; Mrs. Parker, *Glossary of Words used in Oxfordshire* (*E. Dial. Soc.*, c. 5<sup>1</sup>). We must here also mention the Quakers (or Society of Friends) ; in the last century their usage does not seem to have been fully settled: witness the following quotations, where Quakers are introduced as speaking :—

*Spectator*, 132 (Aug. 1, 1711), "*Thee* and I are to part by-and-by. . . . When two such as *thee* and I meet . . . *thou* should'st rejoice" (in what follows he also sometimes says *thou*) | Fielding, *Tom Jones*, ii., 127, "Perhaps, *thou* hast lost a friend. If so,

<sup>1</sup> Here we read about a pronunciation "with a very obscure vowel sound" ; is this a continuation of the form *thu* with short [u], mentioned above, § 99 ? In Mid-Yorkshire *thou* seems still to be used, even as an accusative, according to Mr. Robinson, whose words are not, however, completely clear ; see *E. Dial. Soc.*, v., p. xxiii. In the dialect of Windhill in the West Riding of Yorkshire, as described by Dr. J. Wright (*E. Dial. Soc.*, 1892, p. 116), the old case-distinction is preserved, except when the pronouns are used absolutely.

*thou* must consider we are all mortal. And why should'st *thou* grieve when *thou* knowest. . . . I myself have my sorrow as well as *thee*." <sup>1</sup>

In this century the prevalence of *thee* is shown by the following statements :—<sup>2</sup>

H. Christmas, in Pegge's *Anecd.*, 3rd ed., 131, a Quaker rarely says, "I hope thou art well ; wilt thou come and dine with me ?"—but, "I hope *thee* are well ; will *thee* come and dine with me ?"

Gummere, *L. c.*, 285, "In point of fact, few members of the Society of Friends use *thou* in familiar speech. They use the singular in familiar speech, but . . . it is the dat.-nom. *thee*, not *thou*. . . . I have seen a familiar letter of an educated Friend, written in the early part of the eighteenth century, where the *thee* is used as nom., though any solemn passage calls out a formal *thou*. . . . The most remarkable case I ever observed was where a lady, not a Friend, extended to several visitors, who were of that sect, an invitation as follows : ' Won't *thee* all walk into this room ? ' "

<sup>1</sup> In the same book, Squire Western also occasionally uses *thee* as a nom. ; see iv., 309, "I know her better than *thee* dost".

<sup>2</sup> See also Abbott, *Shakesp. Gramm.*, § 205 ; Storm, *Engl. Philol.*, p. 209 (from *Uncle Tom's Cabin*) ; Wash. Moon, *Ecclesiast. English*, p. 170.

In Miss Muloch's *John Halifax, Gentleman*, the Friends constantly use this *thee* :—

I., 1, "*Thee* need not go into the wet" | 3, "Unless *thee* wilt go with me" | 4, "Where dost *thee* come from? Hast *thee* any parents living? How old might *thee* be? *Thee* art used to work" | 5, "*Thee* shall take my son home . . . art *thee* . . ." | 11, "*Thee* be . . . has *thou* . . . *thee*'rt" | 15, "*Thee* works . . . *thee* hast never been" | 23, "Didn't *thee* say *thee* wanted work? . . . *thee* need'st not be ashamed . . . Hast *thee* any money?" | 24, "Canst *thee*" | 26, "Canst *thee* drive? . . . *thee* can drive the cart . . . *thee* hasn't" | 28, "*Thee* said *thee* had no money" | 49, "*Thee* doesn't,"<sup>1</sup> etc., etc.

107. (209) Here I end my survey of the various case-shifting agencies and of their operations. As already mentioned, it extremely often happens that in the same sentence two or more causes co-operate to make the speaker use a different case from what we should expect, or rather from what the grammar of an earlier stage of the language would require. The more frequently such concurrences occur, the greater the vitality of the new manner of using the

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<sup>1</sup> I do not know whether the inconsistencies in the use of the different persons of the verbs must be ascribed to the authoress, or if they really occur (or occurred) in the language as actually spoken by the Quakers.

case in question. We saw in § 76 that two separate tendencies, whose effects do not appear properly till some two hundred years later, were powerful enough when co-operating to bring about a visible (that is, an audible) result. And on reading again the quotations used to illustrate the first sections of this chapter you will find that the forms in *e* supply a comparatively greater contingent than the other forms, showing thus the concurrence of the associations treated in § 91. The facts which have been brought to light will, moreover, have made it clear that with the pronouns of the second person more shifting agencies were at work than with the rest (§§ 86, 87, 91-102), the result being that the original case-relations have been completely revolutionised in these pronouns. In the case of *I* and *me*, too, some special causes of changes in the case-relations have been pointed out (§§ 90, 91); but they proved to be much less powerful than those seen in the second person, and operated besides in opposite directions, so that the same simplicity as that found in *you* was here impossible. Finally, we have seen that the invariable position of *who* before the verb has caused it to become a common case, *whom* being relegated to a very limited province which it did not properly belong to.

108. (210) There is one factor I have not taken into account, though it is nearly everywhere given as explaining the majority of case-shiftings in a great many languages,—I mean the *tendency to let the objective case prevail over the subjective case*. My reason

is simply that this tendency cannot be considered as a cause of case-shiftings ; it does not show us how these are called forth in the mind of the speaker ; it *indicates the direction of change and the final result, but not its why and wherefore*. Nay, in English, at least, it does not even exhaustively indicate the direction of change, as will be gathered from some points in the above exposition : the nominative carries the day in the absolute construction, in *who* and in the (vulgar) combination *between you and I* ; note also the change of the case used with the old impersonal verbs. Still, it must be granted that the nominative generally has the worst of it ; this is a consequence of the majority of the case-shifting agencies operating in favour of the accusative ; thus, while it is only the position immediately before the verb that supports the nominative, the accusative is always the most natural case in any other position ; see, for instance, the treatment of *than* as a preposition.

**109.** (211) This will afford an explanation of the fact that wherever we see the development of special emphatic or " absolute " pronouns as opposed to conjoint pronouns (used in direct conjunction with the verb), the former will as a rule be taken from the originally oblique cases, while the nominative is restricted to some sort of unstressed affix to the verb.

Such a development is not carried through in Standard English, which has formed the principal subject of our investigations. But if we turn to the

dialects now existing in England, we shall find this *distinction of absolute and conjoint pronouns* made very frequently. A thorough examination of the case-relations of living dialects would present very great interest, although it would rather show the results of similar developments to those found in the literary language—with many deviations, it is true—than throw any fresh light on the agencies at work or the causes of the changes effected. These are best investigated in the literary language, because we there have materials from so many succeeding centuries that we are often enabled to discover the first germs of what living dialects would only present to us as a development brought to a definite (or preliminary) conclusion. For this reason, as well as for the obvious one that the dialects of our own days have not been so fully and reliably treated, especially with regard to syntax, as to render a satisfactory exposition possible, I shall content myself with a few remarks only on the pronouns in the dialects.

**110.** (212) In the dialect of the southern counties of Scotland, so admirably treated by Dr. Murray an emphatic form, originating in the old accusative, is used very much as the corresponding forms in French, *e.g.*, *Thaim* 'at hæ̃s, aye geates mair; *mey*, aa canna gang (moi je ne peux pas aller); *yuw* an' *mey* 'll gang ower the feild. "He gave it to you" = hey gæ *ye'd*; "he gave it to YOU" = hey gæ *yuw'd*; "he gave IT to you" = hey gæ *ye hyt*; "he gave IT to YOU" = hey gæ *yuw hyt*.



For the dialect of West Somerset, Elworthy gives no less than six series of forms, *viz.*, for the *nominative*: (1) "full" forms, used when the nominative stands before its verb with emphasis; among these forms we notice the old objective forms *dhee* and *yue*; perhaps also *uur*, "her," if Dr. Murray is not right in considering it as the old nom. *heo*; (2) unemphatic forms used before the verb, generally the same forms as in the first series, only weakened [*ee* = *ye*?]; (3) interrogative enclitic forms, among which [*ees*] *us* is noticeable as being used exactly as the Shakespearian *us* in *shall's*, see above, § 84; in the third person pl. *um* = O. E. *heom* is used in the same manner; and (4) unconnected forms, all of them old accusatives, except *he* (*ee*), compare § 94, and *dhai*. Then for the *objective* case we have two series of forms: (1) the unemphatic, of which we note the second person pl. *ee* = *ye* and the third person sg. masc., *un*, *n* = O. E. *hine*, see § 49; and (2) emphatic or prepositional, among these *aay* concurrently with *mee*, and *wee* with *uus* (§ 94), and on the same principle also *ee'* (he) and *shee'*; finally *dhai*. *Whom* has here as well as in Scotch been completely superseded by *who*.

In the vulgar dialects of the town populations (especially of the London Cockney) the accusative has been victorious, except when the pronoun is used in immediate conjunction with the verb as its subject; a point of special interest is the use of *them* as an attribute adjective before a noun. As examples

abound everywhere, I shall give only a few, of which the first and third are peculiarly instructive for the distinction of absolute and conjoint forms:—<sup>1</sup>

Dickens, *M. Ch.*, 352, "Don't *they* expect you then?' inquired the driver. 'Who?' said Tom. 'Why, *them*,' returned the driver" | *Orig. Engl.*, 140, "*Him* and mother and baby and *me* could all go with him" | 123, "*Them* paddling steamers is the ones for goin'. *They* just begin to puff a bit first." Compare, however, 90, "*Them*'s the two I see".

III. (213) To return to Standard English. We see that the phenomena dealt with in this chapter bear on *accidence* (*you, who*), on *syntax* (*himself* as the subject, the absolute nominative, the subject of passive verbs, etc.) and finally on *word signification* (the meaning of some of the old impersonal verbs now being changed; the old *like* = "to be pleasant," the modern *like* = "to be pleased with"). I shall here call special attention to the latent though complete change which has taken place in the grammatical construction of more than one phrase while seemingly handed down unchanged from generation to generation. I am thinking of such phrases as:—

if <i>you</i>	<i>like</i> ,
if <i>you</i>	<i>please</i> ,
formerly : dat. (pl.)	3rd pers. sg. subjunct.
now : nom. (sg. or pl.)	2nd pers. (sg. or pl.) indic.

<sup>1</sup> See also Miss Muloch, *J. Halifax*, 207: "Let us talk of something else. Of Miss March? *She* has been greatly better all day? *She*? No, not *her* to-day."

Compare also *you were better do it*, where *you* was a dative and is now the subject in the nominative, and where simultaneously *were* has changed imperceptibly from the third person singular (*it* being understood) to the second person pl. or sg. In handing something to some one you will often say, "*Here you are!*" meaning, "Here is something for you, here is what you want". I think that this phrase too contains an old dative; and perhaps, some centuries ago, in handing only one thing, people would say, "Here you is!"<sup>1</sup>

**112.** (214) A scheme of the pronominal forms treated in the present chapter according to their values in the every-day language of the close of the nineteenth century would look something like this:—  
Subject, joined to the verb :      Nominative, when not joined to the verb :      Everywhere

<i>I, we</i>	<i>me, we</i>	<i>me, us</i>
<i>you</i>	<i>you</i>	<i>you</i>
<i>he, she, they</i>	<i>he, she, they</i>	<i>him, her, them</i>
<i>(himself, herself, themselves)</i>	<i>himself, herself, themselves</i>	<i>himself, herself, themselves</i>
<i>who</i>	<i>whom, who</i>	<i>who</i>

**113.** (215) If now finally we ask : Are the changes described in this chapter on the whole progressive?

<sup>1</sup> Another case in point is perhaps the obsolete combination with *force*; Chaucer has "no force" (*fors*) with the meaning "no matter, it does not matter": *force* is here the noun, Fr. *force*. If this was used with a dative (Sh., *Love's L.*, v., 2, 440, "*you force not to forswear*") it would look like a verb, and the next step would then be to use it as in Sh., *Lucr.*, 1021, "*I force not argument a straw*".

the answer must be an affirmative one. Although for obvious reasons personal pronouns are more apt to preserve old irregularities than other classes of words, we find instead of the old four irregular forms, *thou, thee, ye* and *you*, one form carried through uniformly ; the same uniformity is, as far as case is concerned, observable in the *self*-forms as compared with the old *he self, hine self*, etc., and *who* shows almost the same indifference to cases. Then there is some progress in syntax which does not appear from the scheme just given. Many of the uncertainties in the choice of case exemplified in the early sections of the chapter are owing to a want of correspondence between the logical and grammatical categories ; for instance, when a word might be logically, but not grammatically, the subject. Sometimes, also, one grammatical rule would require one case, and another equally applicable rule a different one. The inconsistency was particularly glaring where the logical (and psychological) subject was to be put in quite another case than that generally used to denote the subject ; and here, with the old impersonal verbs and in the absolute construction, logic has completely conquered the old grammar. The rule which is entirely incompatible with the old state of things, that the word immediately preceding the verb is logically and grammatically the subject of the sentence, has been carried through on the whole with great consistency. And in the great facility which the English have now acquired of making the real psychological subject

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grammatically the subject of a passive sentence, the language has gained a decided advantage over the kindred languages, an advantage which Danish is even now struggling to acquire, in spite of the protests of the schoolmaster grammarians. Thus we see that many phenomena, which by most grammarians would be considered as more or less gross blunders or "bad grammar," but which are rather to be taken as natural reactions against the imperfections of traditional language, are really, when viewed in their historical connexion, conducive to progress in language.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE ENGLISH GROUP GENITIVE.

**114.** To a mind trained exclusively in Latin (or German) grammar such English constructions as "the Queen of England's power," or "he took somebody else's hat," must seem very preposterous; the word that ought to be in the genitive case (*Queen, somebody*) is put in the nominative or accusative, while in the one instance *England*, whose power is not meant, and in the other even an adverb, is put in the genitive case. Similarly, in the case of "words in apposition," where it might be expected that each would be put in the genitive, as in "King Henry the Eighth's reign," only one of them takes the genitive ending.

**115.** In an interesting and suggestive article, "Die genetische erklärung der sprachlichen ausdrucksformen" (*Englische Studien*, xiv., 99), H. KLINGHARDT makes an attempt to explain this as well as other peculiarities of English grammar (the passive, in "the request was complied with," "he was taken no notice of," "with one another," etc.), by the power of the accent. "In English," he says, "unstressed

vowels are weaker than in German ; and the distinction between stressed and unstressed syllables greater. So it is with the stressed words of a sentence in relation to the unstressed words surrounding them ; the action of stress therefore reaches farther than in German ; emphatic words are capable of gathering around them a greater number of weak words than in German. . . . The [German] pupil will now understand how easily and conveniently in English small groups of words, such as *King Henry the Eighth*, are joined together under one accent, and are inflected, put in the Saxon genitive, etc., exactly in the same manner as single words."

**116.** I do not think that this theory is the correct one, and I shall state my objections. In the first place, we are not told which word in the group is invested with that powerful accent that is said to keep the group together. Nothing hinders us from pronouncing a group like "King Richard the Second's reign" at one moment with strong stress on Richard (as opposed to, say, *Edward* II.) and at the next with great emphasis on the numeral (as opposed to Richard the *Third*) ; we may also pronounce the two words with even stress ; yet in all of these cases the grammatical construction is the same. Next, if we adopt Dr. Klinghardt's theory, we must assume an historical change in English accent which seems to be supported by no other fact. And thirdly, the theory fails completely to account for the difference between the *final s* in genitives like *Queen of England's* or *sister-in-*

*law's*, and the *internal s* in plurals like *the queens of England* or *sisters-in-law*.

Before venturing to propose a new explanation it will be well to look somewhat closely at the historical development of the several phenomena with which we are here concerned. I shall group my examples under six heads.

## I.

**117. Attributive words** (adjectives, articles) were in Old English and in the first period of Middle English inflected equally with the substantives to which they belonged. But as early as the beginning of the thirteenth century we find the modern construction used alongside with the old one: thus in the case of the definite article:—

*Ancren Riwe*, 82, "*þes* deofles bearn, *þes* deofles bles" | 84, "*þes* deofles corbin" | 142, "*tes* deofles puffes" | 188, "*tes* deofles bettles," etc. | | 210, "*iðe* deofles seruise" | 212 and 216, "*iðe* deofles kurt" | 212, "*iðe* deofles berme" | 134, "of *þe* deofles gronen," etc.

I have not examined the matter closely enough to be positive, but it seems as if the uninflected form was chiefly used after prepositions, and it is not entirely improbable that the uninflected genitive of the article originates in those cases where the article belongs as properly or more properly to the noun following than to the genitive: *in the* (devil's) *service*,



or *in the devils-service*.<sup>1</sup> Examples of adjectives from the same text:—

402, “of *reades monnes blod*” | 110, “his *moderes wop & þe oðres Maries*” | 406, “*mines federes luue*” | 48, “*eueriches limes uelunge*” | 180, “*eueriches flesches eise*” | 194, “þisses *worldes figelunge*” | 198, “þisses *hweolpes nurice*” | | 94, “*euerich ones mede*” | 112, “*euerich monnes fleschs*” | 6, “after *euch ones manere*” | 134, “after *euerich ones efne*”.

**118.** In Chaucer we find no single trace of an inflected genitive of any attributive adjective; the rapid disappearance of the *s* in the gen. may to a great extent be due to the analogical influence of the weak forms of the adjective, in which after the loss of the final *n* the endings were the same for the genitive as for all the other cases.

In present-day English most adjectives are placed before their nouns, and then are never inflected; an adjective put after its noun is only capable of assuming the genitive *s* in cases like *Henry the Eighth's*; it is impossible to say, for example, *the women present's opinions*. Comp. Marlowe, *Jew*, 242, “That you will needs haue *ten years* [genitive!] tribute *past*” (= the tr. of ten years past).

## II.

**119.** Two or more **words in apposition**. Examples of the old full inflexion:—

<sup>1</sup>The same explanation holds good for the adj. in *A. R.*, 190, “Uor *al þe worldes golde*”.

*A. S. Chron., E.*, 853, "*Æðelwulfes dohtor West Seaxna cininges*" | *ibid., A.*, 918, "*Of Eadweardes cyninges anwalde*" | *ibid., D.*, 903, "*Aþulf ealdorman, Ealhswyðe broðor, Eadweardes moder cynges* (brother of Ealhswyðe, the mother of King Edward)" | Ælfric, Sweet's *A. S. Reader*, 14 b, 7, "*On Herodes dagum cyninges*" | *ibid.*, 136, "*Iacobes wif ðæs heahfæderes*" | *ibid.*, 15, 231, "*Aidanes sawle þæs halgan biscoopes*" | *A. R.*, 312, "*We beoð alle Godes sunen þe kinges of heouene*" | *Ch., M.*, ii., 349 (1021), "*By my modres Ceres soule*".

It will be observed that the two words in apposition are frequently separated by the governing word; in the following two instances we cannot decide by the form whether the last words are in the nominative or in the genitive case, as neither of them formed the genitive in *s* at that period:—

*A. R.*, 146, "*Hesteres bone þe cwene*" | *ibid.*, 412, "*Seinte Marie dei Magdalene*".

**120.** But in a great many cases, where we have this word-order—and it is, indeed, the order most frequently used throughout the M. E. period<sup>1</sup>—there can be no doubt that the last word is put in the nominative (or common) case. The leaving out of the case-sign is rare in Old English, but extremely

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Zupitza's note to *Guy of Warwick*, l. 687, where many examples are collected ("on þe maydenys halfe Blanchflore," etc.), and Kellner, *Blanchardyn*, cvii.

common in Middle English; in Modern English it is getting rarer again. The phenomenon is to be classed with those mentioned above, § 61.

*A. S. Chron., E.*, 855, "To *Karles* dohtor *Francna cining*" | *A. R.*, 148, "*Moiseses* hond, *Godes prophete*" | *ibid.*, 244, "*þuruh Iulianes* heste *þe amperur*" | 352, "*Ine Jesu Cristes* rode, *mi louerd*" | *Ch., Hous of F.*, 142, "*Seys* body *the king*" | 282, "*The kinges* meting *Pharao*" | *Ch., B.*, 431, "*Kenulphus* sone, the noble *king* of *Mercenrike*" | *F.*, 672, "*The god Mercurius* hous the *slye*" | *L. G. W.*, 1468, "*Isiphilee* the shene, That whylom *Thoas* doghter was, the *king*" | *Malory*, 70, "By my *faders* soule *Vtherpendragon*" | 91, "*Gaweyn* shalle reuenge his *faders* deth *kynge Loth*" | 126, "In his *wyues* armes *Morgan le fay*" | *Marl., Tamburl.*, 193, "In the circle of your *fathers* armes, The mightie *Souldan* of *Egyptia*" | *Greene, Friar B.*, 2, 10, "To *Bacon's* secret cell, A *friar* newly stall'd in *Brazennose*" | *Sh., 1 H. IV.*, ii., 4, 114, "I am not yet of *Percies* mind, the *Hotspurre* of the North, *he* that killes me some sixe or seauen dozen of Scots" | *Matt.*, xiv., 3 (Auth. V.), "For *Herodias'* sake, his brother *Philip's wife*" | *Wycherley (Mermaid Ser.)*, 24, "He has now pitched his nets for *Gripe's* daughter, the rich *scrivener*" | *Tennyson*, 322, "*Merlin's*

hand, the *Mage* at Arthur's court" | Mth. Arnold, *Poems*, i., 191, "Doubtless thou fearest to meet *Balder's* voice, *Thy brother*, whom through folly thou didst slay".<sup>1</sup>

**121.** In Middle English the opposite word-order with the whole genitival group before the governing word, is sometimes found; and in course of time it becomes more frequent; the genitive sign is only added to the last word. This construction is especially frequent when a proper name is preceded by a title, while it is generally avoided when the proper name is followed by a somewhat lengthy apposition. I have not thought it necessary to give many modern examples:—

*O. E. Homilies*, ii., 3, "After *ure lauerd ihesu cristes* tocume" | Ch., *L. G.*, 2247, "*King Pandiones* faire doghter" | *F.*, 672, "The *god Mercurius* hous" | Zupitza's *Guy*, 1956, "*The dewke Segwyns* cosyn" | *ibid.*, 8706, "*The kynge Harkes* lande" | Malory, 232, "*My lady my susters* name is dame Lyonesse" | *Roister*, 67, "For *my friende Goodluck's* sake" | Marl., *Tamb.*, 1168, "By *Mahomet my kinsmans* sepulcher" | Thack., *P.*, i., 18, "Miss Hunkle, of Lilybank, *old Hunkle the Attorney's* daughter".

<sup>1</sup> Mth. Arnold, *Poems*, i., 152, we have a closely connected phenomenon, namely, the repetition of a genitive in the common case, in order to tack on to it a relative clause: "And straight he will come down to *Ocean's* strand, *Ocean* whose watery ring enfolds the world".

**122.** When the governing word is not expressed, the *s*-ending is—or was—often added to the first noun exclusively; Lindley Murray says (*Grammar*, 8th edit., p. 262) that of the three forms, “I left the parcel at Smith s, the bookseller”: or “at Smith, the bookseller’s”: or “at Smith’s, the bookseller’s,”—the first is most agreeable to the English idiom; and if the addition consists of two or more nouns, the case seems to be less dubious; as, “I left the parcel at Smith’s, the bookseller and stationer”. This does not now apply to a group consisting of a title and a proper name, as it did formerly, witness the first two of the following quotations, which would in modern speech be *King Alexander’s* and *Admiral Presane’s*. Even the last example does not seem to be now very natural; and custom is perhaps more and more in favour of saying “at Smith, the bookseller’s,” or “at Smith’s, the bookseller’s,” unless “the bookseller” is only part of a phrase, *e.g.*, “at Smith’s, the bookseller in Trinity Street”. At least, this is the opinion of Mr. G. C. Moore Smith.

*Guy of Warw.*, 7921, “Hyt [the helme] was *Aly-sawndurs the kynges*” | *ibid.*, 8714, “Hyt [the cuntre] ys *admyrals Presane*” | Sh., *H. V.*, i., 2, 105, “Inuoke his warlike spirit, and *your great vnckles, Edward the Black Prince*” | Thack., *P.*, i., 259, “He managed to run up a fine bill *at Nine’s, the livery stable-keeper*” | *ibid.*, ii., 199, “I remember *at poor Rawdon Crawley’s*, Sir Pitt Crawley’s

*brother*" | Beaconsf., *Loth.*, 16, "Villas like  
*my cousin's, the Duke of Luton*".

**123.** When **one of the words in apposition is a personal pronoun** a special difficulty arises from the genitive proper being here replaced by a possessive pronoun. What is the genitive of "we, the tribunes"? It would be a little awkward to say "our, the tribunes' power," and so most people would probably say with Shakespeare (*Cor.*, iii., 3, 100), "the power of *us the tribunes*".

The want of a comprehensive genitive is most frequently felt when *all* or *both* is subjoined to *we*, *you*, or *they*. Here O. E. had a fully inflected form, *heora begra lufu*, "the love of them both"; *heora begra eagan*, "the eyes of them both" (in M. E. often with the gen. form, *bather*, *bother*), *ealra ura*. A few examples will show this combination in M. E. :—

*Lay.*, 5283 (quoted by Koch, ii., 240), "*Heore beire*  
nome ich þe wulle telle" | *Leg. St. Kath.*,  
1790, "*Hare baðre luue*" | *Perc.*, 31, "At *ther*  
*botheres* wille" | | *A. R.*, 52, "Eue *vre alre*  
*moder*" | *Ch.*, *A.*, 799, "At *our aller* cost" |  
*ibid.*, 823, "Up roos our hoste, and was *our*  
*aller cok*" | *M. P.*, i., 84, "*Oure alder foo*"  
| *L. G. W.*, 298, "*Our alder pris*" | *Mal.*, 134,  
"Kynge Arthur, *our alther* liege lord" |  
James I., King's Q., "*þoure alleris* frende" (in  
NED, *all D.* ii., 4, cf. *ibid.*, *both* 4 b, and see  
also Mätzner, *Wb.*, "*all* a 4, and *beȝen*").

Note the excrescent *-es* in *botheres* and *alleris*, show-

ing that the value of the old genitive ending had been forgotten. In a few cases we find the common gen. ending added to *both* :—

Ch., *M. P.*, 1, 83, "But, for *your bothes* peynes, I you preye" | Mal., 98, "To *our bothes* destruction"; but in the great majority of cases *both* and *all* are used without any ending; the possessive is generally placed after the adjective, but the two first examples will show the opposite order :—

Ch., *B.*, 221, "Diversitee bitwene *her bothe* lawes" | *M. P.*, 4, 52, "by *her bothe* assent" | Mal., 71, "*Both her* swerdys met euen to gyders" | 79, "I haue *both their* hedes" | 151, "Layd the naked swerd ouerthwart *bothe their* throtes" | *Roister*, 31, "To *both our* heartes ease" | Marl., *Tamb.*, 4644, "*Both their* worths" | Greene, *F. B.*, 8, 110, "*Both our* carcasses" | Sh., *W. T.*, v., 3, 147, "*Both your* pardons" | *R. II.*, iii., 3, 107, "By the royalties of *both your* bloods" | *Cor.*, i., 6, 8, "*Both our* powers" | *ibid.*, iii., 1, 103, "*Both your* voices" | *R. III.*, i., 2, 191, "To *both their* deaths" | *T. S.*, v., 2, 15, "For *both our* sakes" | Milton, *P. L.*, vi., 170, "As *both their* deeds compared this day shall prove" | Thack., *V. F.*, 258, "*Both their* husbands were safe" | *ibid.*, 507, "*Both their* lives" | *Pend.*, i., 304, "That warmth belonged to *both their* natures" | R. Browning, iii., 306, "For *both their* sakes".

124. It will be noticed that in most cases it is perfectly immaterial to the meaning of the passage whether we take *both* as qualifying the pronoun or the following substantive, as each of us has only one head, one throat, one life, etc. But in other instances the same consideration does not hold good; when we read, for instance, in *John Halifax, Gent*, ii., 76, "the name set *both our thoughts* anxiously wandering," the meaning cannot be that each of them had only got one wandering thought, so that *both* must certainly here be taken as a genitive case. But the tendency goes undoubtedly in the direction of taking *both* as a nominative, the construction being avoided whenever that would be obviously impossible: I suppose it would be fruitless to search through the whole of the English literature for a connexion like "*both our four eyes*," although, indeed, Fielding writes (*Tom Jones*, iii., 45): "*Both their several talents* were excessive" (each had several talents); compare *ibid.*, iii., 66, "The two ladies who were riding side by side, looking steadfastly at each other; at the same moment *both their eyes* became fixed; both their horses stopt," etc.

On the other hand, "the sb. often improperly took the plural form by attraction of the pronoun;"<sup>1</sup> this idiom is still in vulgar use, as 'It is *both your faults*,'

<sup>1</sup> The same sort of attraction may occasionally be found where there is no such word as *both* to assist in occasioning it; see Thack., *Ballads*, 80, "The ladies took the hint. And all day were scraping lint, As became their softer genders".



'she is *both their mothers*'" (Murray, *N. E. D.*). This I take to be the reason of the pl. *hopes* in Marl., *Jew*, 879, "He loues my daughter, and she holds him dear. But I have sworn to frustrate *both their hopes*." (They have one and the same hope.) So also in :—

Sh, *All's*, i., 3, 169, "You are my mother, Madam; would you were (So that my Lord your sonne were not my brother) indeed my mother, or were you *both our mothers* . . ." | *Ro.*, ii., 3, 51, "*Both our remedies* Within thy helpe and holy physicke lies (note the sg. of the verb) | Fielding, *T. J.*, iii., 82, "It was visible enough from *both our behaviours*".<sup>1</sup>

Examples of the group genitive with *all* preceding a possessive pronoun :—

<sup>1</sup> Mr. G. C. Moore Smith criticises the view expressed in the text, writing as follows : "I think you are right on 'both your faults'. But in 'both our mothers' and 'both their hopes' I think the notion is plural, as well as the expression. She is--both our--mothers. That is, the mind conceives the two persons for a moment as having each a mother (or a hope of his own)—and then identifies these mothers and hopes. Even if you and I hope for the same end, there are two hopes. If you lost yours, I might keep mine. Of course it may be true, as you say, that the use of the plural is due to attraction from *both*: still it carries with it a sense of plurality, which is present to the speaker's mind. So with 'genders'—as became the sex of each one, sex being looked on as an individual attribute like her name."

Ch., *M. P.*, 5, 618, "I have herd *al your*e opinion"  
 | *F.*, 396, "*Alle her* hertes" | *B.*, 4562, "Hir  
 housbondes losten *alle hir* lyves" | *Mal.*, 134,  
 "*All their* harneis" | *Marl.*, *Tamb.*, 1877, "*All*  
*our* bloods" | *Sh.*, *Cor.*, iv., 6, 35, "*All our*  
 lamentation" | *Sheridan*, *Dr. W.*, 68, "Tell  
 her 'tis *all our* ways" | *Dick.*, *M. Ch.*, 400,  
 "For *all our* sakes" | *Stevenson*, *Tr. Isl.*,  
 283, "It went to *all our* hearts" | *Hood*,  
 "He had drunk up all the stout to *all their*  
 very good healths" | *G. Eliot*, *Mill*, ii., 210,  
 "All their hearts are set on Tom's getting  
 back the mill".

**125.** As the subject of the action expressed by a verbal noun in *-ing* is sometimes put in the genitive (I insist on *your* coming) and sometimes in the common case (I insist on *all* coming), a possibility arises of combining these two expressions; note the different ways in which this is done in the following examples:—

*Sheridan*, "I insist on *your all* meeting me here"  
 | *ibid.*, *Dram. Works*, 56, "The confusion  
 that might arise from *our both* addressing  
 the same lady" | *Fielding*, *T. J.*, iii., 71, "It  
 cannot be wondered at that *their* retiring *all*  
 to sleep at so unusual an hour should excite  
 his curiosity" | *Dick.*, quoted by *Koch*,  
 "*Our all three* coming together was a thing  
 to talk about" | *Beaconsf.*, *Lothair*, 435, "I  
 fancy the famous luncheons at Crecy House

will always go on, and be a popular mode of *their all meeting*” ;

where, perhaps, *of all of them meeting* (or : for them all to meet) would be preferable ; but note that the order of the words *all their*, ordinary as it is in other cases, is here inadmissible.

**126.** Here I finally quote some passages where *of* is used to avoid *all our* :—

Ch., *G.*, 192, “ Iesu Crist, herde *of vs alle* ” | Malory, 84, “ The names *of them bothe* ” | Greene, *F. B.*, 10, 17, “ The liking fancy *of you both* ” | *ibid.*, 10, 25, “ To avoid displeasure *of you both* ” | Thack., *P.*, ii., 215, “ The happiest fortnight in the lives *of both of them* ” | *ibid.*, 220, “ The characters *of both of you* will be discussed ” | *ibid.*, 329, 337, etc. | *Frank Fairl.*, i., 337, “ She was the life and soul *of us all* ” | Troll., *Duke's Ch.*, i., 254, “ For the happiness *of them all* ”.

For the genitive of *both of you*, *some of you*, etc., cf. below, § 130.

**127.** For the genitive of *we two*, etc., I am able to give four quotations : showing, first, the old genitive of *two* ; then the unchanged form ; thirdly, the rare *s-gen.* ; and finally an evasion of the difficulty by an appositional construction :—

*A. R.*, 406, “ I *bisse tweire* monglunge ” | Mal., 110, “ What be *your ii* names ? ” | Bullokar, *Æsop.*, 90, “ *Our twooz* chanc ” | Miss Muloch, *Halifax*, ii., 209, “ You must let me go . . .

anywhere—out of *their* sight—*those two*”  
(= out of the sight of those two).

III.

**128.** Two nouns are **connected by a preposition**, e.g., *father-in-law*, *the Queen of England*. In old times such word-groups were not felt as inseparable units, as they are now; witness Chaucer, *B.*, 3870, “Ageyn Pompeius, *fader thyn in lawe*”. Consequently, when they were to be used in the genitive, they were separated by the governing word; this was the universal practice up to the end of the fifteenth century.

Ch., *B.*, 3442, “of *kinges* blood *Of Perse* is she descended” | *B.*, 3846, “*Philippes* sone of *Macedoyne*” | *E.*, 1170, “for the *wyues* loue of *Bathe*” | *M.*, iv., 108, “That was the *kyng* *Priamus* sone of *Troye*” | | Malory, 45, “The *dukes* wyf of *Tyntagail*” | 127, “I am the *lordes* doughter of *this castel*” | 141, “The *kynges* sone of *Ireland*,” etc.

The same construction is resorted to even in more recent times whenever the ordinary construction would present special difficulties. It is possible to denote a lady as “she in the cap,” but how about the genitive case of such a group? Shakespeare says: “What’s *her* name *in the cap*?” (*L. L. L.*, ii., 209)—“For *honour of former deeds*’ sake” would be rather heavy; so Milton puts it (*Sams. Ag.*, 372), “For *honour’s* sake of *former deeds*”. Compare also Sh., 1 *H. IV.*, iii., 2,

119, "*The Archbishops grace of York*" = the Archbishop of York's grace = his Grace the Archbishop of York.

**129.** But as early as Chaucer we find occasional traces of the modern construction creeping in: at least, I venture to interpret the following passages as containing it:—

*M. P.*, 3, 168, "Morpheus, and Eclympasteyre,  
That was *the god of slepes heyre*" (heir of  
the god of sleep) | *Hous of Fame*, 399,  
"Ovide, That hath ysowen wonder wide  
*The grete god of loves name*" (one MS.  
has "*the god of loue hys*") | *L. G. W.*, 206,  
"For *deyntee of the newe someres sake* I bad  
hem strawen floures on my bed".<sup>1</sup>

From the Elizabethan period the modern usage may be considered as settled and universal; Ben Jonson mentions in his *Grammar* (printed 1640, p. 72) the construction "for the *Duke's* men of *Mysia*" as existing beside that of "*the Duke of Mysia's* men"; but this may be the ordinary conservatism of grammarians, for the former construction seems to be practically never used at that time; in Wallis's *Gramm. Linguae Anglicanae*, 1653, p. 81, the only form mentioned is "*The King of Spain's Court*". I add here a few examples from the three last

<sup>1</sup> In Malory, 108, I find, "My name is Gauayne, the kyng Lott of Orkeney sone"; s seems here left out by a misprint (Lots? Orkeney's?); immediately after that passage the ordinary way of putting it is found: "Kyng Lots sone of Orkeney".

centuries to show the extent of the use of the modern construction :—

Marl., *Tamb.*, 645, "*The King of Perseas crowne*"  
 | *ibid.*, 3298, "Blood is *the God of Wars*  
 rich liury" | Sh., *R. III.*, i., 4, 131, "*The*  
*Duke of Glousters* purse" | Swift, *Gull.*, 133,  
 "To any village or *person of quality's* house"  
 | Field., *T. J.*, iv., 291, "Signed with *the*  
*son of a whore's* own name" | Thc., *P.*, i.,  
 20, "Mrs. Wapshot, as *a doctor of divinity's*  
 lady" | *ibid.*, i., 164, "*The member of Parlia-*  
*ment's* lady" | Carlyle, *Her.*, 2, "A man's  
 religion is the chief fact with regard to him.  
 A man's or *a nation of men's*" | *ibid.*, 87,  
 "*The man of business's* faculty" | Pattison,  
*Milton*, 44, "Agar, who was in *the Clerk*  
*of the Crown's* office" | G. Eliot, *Life and*  
*L.*, ii., 190, "I had *a quarter of an hour's*  
 chat with him" | Ruskin, *Select.*, i., 133,  
 "In some *quarter of a mile's* walk" | Co.  
 Doyle, *Study in Sc.*, 88, "I endeavoured  
 to get *a couple of hours'* sleep" | Christina  
 Rossetti, *Verses*, "Lo, *the King of Kings'*  
 daughter, a high princess".

Sometimes, but very rarely indeed, an ambiguity may arise from this sort of construction, as in the well-known puzzle: "The son of Pharaoh's daughter was the daughter of Pharaoh's son".

In ordinary language the construction is found only with the preposition *of* and in the words *son-in-*

*law*,<sup>1</sup> etc., so also *the Commander-in-Chief's levees* (Thack., *Esmond*, i., 345) and perhaps: "for God in Heaven's sake". But in dialects it is used with other prepositions as well; Murray gives as Scotch (*Dial. of the Southern Counties*, p. 166): "the *màn-wui-the-quheyte-cuol's* horse"; and Elworthy quotes from Somersetshire (*Gramm. of the Dial. of W. Soms.*, p. 157): *Jan Snook uwot tu Langfordz duung kee*, "John Snook out of Langford's donkey"; *Mr. Buury tu Shoaldur u Muutuns paig*, "Mr. Bridge of the Shoulder of Mutton's pig".

**130.** What is the genitive of *some of them*, *any of you*, *one of us*? There is some difficulty here, and the reason of it is the same as we met with before, *viz.*, the difference between a genitive proper and a possessive pronoun, cf. § 123. In olden days, when a partitive relation could be expressed by the gen. pl., we occasionally find formations like these: *A. R.*, 204, "*hore summes nome*" (the name of some of them), where the genitive ending is tacked on to the nom., or Orm, l. 2506, "& all onn ane wise feil till *e33þer þe33ress herrte*" (to the heart of either of them), where it is added to the old gen. pl.

From more recent times, where the partitive relation has to be expressed by *of*, I have noted the

<sup>1</sup> It is curious to note that the gen. pl. of these words, *son-in-law*, *daughter-in-law*, etc., is avoided, although it would be one of the few instances in which there would be three different forms for the gen. sg., nom. pl. and gen. pl.: "I know all my *\*sons-in-law's* friends".

following instances of the possessive pronoun being used where the genitive belongs properly to the whole combination; it will be noticed that in most, though not in all cases, it does not affect the meaning of the clause whether we take the adjective, etc., as referring to the genitive or to the governing word (for "some of the men's heads" means either "some of the heads of the men," or "the heads of some of the men") :—

Malory, 79, "I maye not graunte *neyther of her* hedes" | Sh., *Tw. N.*, iii., 4, 184, "God haue mercie vpon *one of our* soules" (the soul of one of us) | *R. II.*, i., 3, 194, "Had the king permitted vs, *One of our* soules had wandred in the ayre" | 2 *H. IV.*, ii., 4, 16, "They will put on *two of our* ierkins" (the jerkins of two of us) | *T. S.*, v., 2, 171, "My mind has been as big as *one of yours*" (as that of one of you) | Drayton, *Love's Farewell*, "Be it not seen in *either of our* brows That we one jot of former love retain" | Moore, *Ir. Mel.*, "(And doth not a meeting like this) Though haply o'er *some of your* brows, as o'er mine, The snowfall of time may be stealing" | Black, *Fortunatus*, i., 183, "The hopeless resignation that had settled on *some of their* faces" | Thack., *P.*, iii., 383, "A painful circumstance which is attributable to *none of our* faults" (to the fault of none of us) | Co. Doyle, *Study in*



*Sc.*, 141, "Without meaning to hurt *either of your* feelings" | T. Hughes, *T. Brown's Schoold.*, 118, "I'm taking the trouble of writing this true history for *all of your* benefits" | Jerrold, *Caudle*, 17, "The brandy you've poured down *both of your* throats" | Stevenson, *Catriona*, 29, "For *all of our* sakes".

Dr. Murray once told me that it would be possible for a Scotchman to add the *s* to the whole of such a combination ("Is this *ony of you's* ?"), and that you might even, though rarely, in colloquial English hear "This must be *some of you's*". I have some suspicion that this construction is a little less rare in colloquial language when there is a word added in apposition to *you* : "Is this *any of you children's* ?"

#### IV.

**131.** In the case of a word **defined by a following adverb**, the old practice was to add the *s* of the genitive to the former word, and this may be found even in our times, especially when there is no governing word immediately following :—

Latroon, *Engl. Rogue*, 1665, i., 53, "I should devote myself to her service, and *nones else*" | Thack., *P.*, i, 79, "They were more in Pendennis's way than in *anybody's else*" | Mark Twain, *Mississ.*, 236, "The entire turmoil had been on Lem's account and *nobody's else*".

But in most cases the *s* is tacked on to the end of the whole group:—

“I took *somebody else's* hat” | Dick., *M. Ch.*, 372,  
 “*Everybody else's* rights are my wrongs” |  
 Thack., *V. F.*, 244, “On a day when *everybody else's* countenance wore the appearance of the deepest anxiety” | *Pend.*, i., 41, “Women are always sacrificing themselves or somebody for *somebody else's* sake” | *ibid.*, 304, “*Somebody else's* name” | G. Eliot, *Mill*, ii., 13, “*Somebody else's* tradesman is in pocket by somebody else” | *Fortn. Rev.*, Sept., 1877, 355, “Credulity is belief in *somebody else's* nonsense” | Ibsen, *Master Builder*, tr. by Gosse and Archer, 51, “Yes, *who else's* daughter should I be?”

Instead of the last mentioned form, some people would perhaps prefer “whose else”; Dr. Murray told me he would say “who else's baby,” but “whose else” when the substantive was understood. In the following quotations both the pronoun and the adverb are inflected:—

Dick., *Christm. Books*, 59 (*Chr. Carol*), “‘Don't drop that oil upon the blankets, now'. ‘His blankets?’ asked Joe. ‘*Whose else's* do you think?’” | Sketchley, *Cleopatra's Needle*, 27 (vulg.), “As if it was easy for any one to find their own needle, let alone *any one's elses*”.

The only adverb besides *else* where the same con-

struction might be expected is *ever*,<sup>1</sup> but the genitive of *whoever* seems generally to be avoided. Mrs. Parr, however, writes (in a short story, *Peter Trotman*):—

“The lovely creatures in my imagination took the form of the Matilda, Julia, Fanny, or *whoever's* image at that moment filled my breast”.

But some English friends have corroborated my conjecture that it would be more natural to say, *e.g.*, “It doesn't matter *whose ever* it is,” than “*whoever's*,” which would indeed, according to some, be impossible in this connexion; and if the elements of the word are separated, *who* of course is inflected, as in Sh., *R. III.*, iv., 4, 224, “*whose hand soeuer*”.

## V.

**132.** When one word should properly govern two or more genitives, connected by *and* or some other **conjunction**, it makes some difference whether the governing word is placed after the first or after the last of the genitives.

The former was the usual word-order in O. E., and

<sup>1</sup> In answer to my question: “Is the *s*-genitive of words formed like *a looker-on* ever used?” Mr. Moore Smith writes to me: “It would be possible to say, ‘You've got the *chucker-out's* place,’ but not ‘the *chucker's-out* place’ (*chucker-out* is slang for a man employed to turn noisy people out of a meeting); ‘This is the *whipper-in's* chair’. Especially when the connexion is very close.”

may still be used, especially when two distinct objects are denoted, while it is rare if the same object is meant, as in the *David Grieve* example below :—

*Oros.*, 18, 18, “ þæm sciprapum þe beoð of *hwæles* hyde geworht & of *seoles* ” | *Chron.*, A., 888, “ *Westseaxna ælmessan & Ælfredes cyninges* ” | *ibid.*, 901, “ Butan *ðæs cyninges* leafe & his *witena* ” | Ch., L. G. W., 1086, “ Be ye nat *Venus* sone and *Anchises* ? ” | Thack., P., i., 16, “ *Little Arthur's* figure and *his mother's* ” | *ibid.*, 159, “ The empty goblets and now useless teaspoons which had served to hold and mix *the captain's* liquor and *his friend's* ” | *ibid.*, 217, “ Affecting *Miss Costigan's* honour and *his own* ” | Mrs. Humphrey Ward, *D. Grieve*, iii., 65, “ In spite of *her* friendship and *Ancrum's* ”.

**133.** As the arrangement of the words is analogous to that mentioned above, § 119 (of *Herodes dagum cyninges*), we cannot wonder at finding here again in M. E. a dropping of the genitive ending in the last word, parallel to that in “ *Iulianes heste the amperur* ”. Prof. Zupitza quotes the following instances in his edit. of *Guy of Warwick* (note to l. 688) : “ *kyngys* doghtur and *emperowre* ” (= a king and emperor's daughter) ; “ *dewky's* doghtur and *emperowre* ; for *Gyes* sowle and for *hys wyffe* ” (for Guy's soul and for that of his wife). From more recent times I have noted the following passages :—

Marl., *Jew*, 278, “ How, my Lord ! my mony ? ”

*Thine and the rest*" (= that of the rest) | Sh., *Lear*, iii., 6, 101, "*His* life with *thine*, and all that offer to defend him" (= and that of all) | *L. L. L.*, v., 2, 514, "'Tis some policie To have one shew worse then the *kings and his companie*" | Byron, iv., 214, "*Thy sire's Maker and the earth's and heaven's and all that in them is*" | Troll., *Duke's Ch.*, i, 82, "It is simply self-protection then? *His own and his class* (protection of himself and of his class) | Tennyson, *Foresters*, 43, "My mother, for *whose sake and the blessed Queen of heaven* I reverence all women".

**134.** Very nearly akin to these cases are other cases of leaving out the *s* of the last of two or more genitives; the governing word is here also understood from the first genitive; but this is farther off from the genitive without *s* than in the previous examples. Accordingly, there is more danger of ambiguity, and the construction is, therefore, now avoided. It is found in M. E.—

Ch., *A.*, 590, "His top was dokked lyk a preest biforn" (like that of a p.) | *Guy of Warw.*, 8054, "Hys necke he made lyke no man".

Al. Schmidt has collected a good many examples of this phenomenon from Shakespeare. He considers it, however, as a rhetorical figure rather than a point of grammar; thus he writes (*Sh. Lex.*, p. 1423): "Shakespeare very frequently uses the name of a person or thing itself for a single particular

quality or point of view to be considered, in a manner which has seduced great part of his editors into needless conjectures and emendations". I pick out some of his quotations, and add a few more from my own collections :—

Sh., *Pilgr.*, 198, "*Her* lays were tuned like *the lark*" (like the lays of the lark) | *W. T.*, i., 2, 169, "He makes a *July's* day short as *December*" (as a December's day) | 2 *H. VI.*, iv., 2, 29, "*Iniquity's* throat cut like a *calf*" | *John*, ii., 486, "*Her* dowry shall weigh equal with a *queen*" | 2 *H. VI.*, iii., 2, 318, "*Mine* hair be fixed on end as *one* *distract*" | *Cor.*, i., 6, 27, "I know the sound of *Marcius'* tongue from *every* *meaner* *man*" | *ibid.*, iii., 2, 114, "My throat of war be turned into a pipe small as *an* *eunuch*" | Greene, *Friar B.*, 3, 36, "Whence are you, sir? of Suffolk? for *your* terms are finer than *the* *common* *sort* *of* *men*" | *ibid.*, 12, 47, "*Her* beauty passing Mars's *paramour*".<sup>1</sup>

**135.** We now come to the second possible word-order, *viz.*, that of placing the governing word after all the genitives belonging to it. In most cases the genitive ending is added to each of the genitives:

<sup>1</sup> In combinations such as "his capacity as a judge" we have a somewhat similar phenomenon, in so far as the common case "a judge" is referred to the genitive "his"; there is, however, the important difference that "a judge" does not stand for a genitive and cannot be replaced by "a judge's".

"She came with Tom's and John's children"; but, as a matter of fact, the *s* not unfrequently is added to the last word only, so that we have the formula  $(a + b) \times$  instead of  $ax + bx$ . The earliest instance I know of is that recorded by Prof. Zupitza, *Guy*, 7715, "For *syr Gye and Harroudes* sake". From more recent times:—

Malory, 37, "It shal be *your worship & the childis* auaille" | Marlowe, *Tamb.*, 3901, "*My lord and husbandes death*" | *ibid.*, 4123. "Is not my life and state as deere to me, *The citie and my native countries* weale, As any thing of price with thy conceit?" (doubtful) | Sh. *Mcb.*, v., 7, 16, "*My wife and childrens* ghosts will haunt me still" | *R. II.*, iii., 62, "All my treasure . . . shall be *your loue and labours* recompence" | *Cor.*, v., 3, 118, "*Thy wife and childrens* blood" | *Merch.*, iii., 4, 30, "Vntill *her husband and my lords* returne" | *H VIII.*, ii., 3, 16, "Sufferance. panging As *soule and bodies* seuering" | *Sonn.*, 21, "*Earth and seas* rich gems" | Milt., *S. A.*, 181, "From *Eshtaol and Zora's* fruitful vale" | *Spectator*, No. 36, p. 60, "A widow gentlewoman, well born both by *father and mother's* side" | "A ship and a half's length" | "An hour and a half's talk" | Darwin, *Life and L.*, i., 144, "The difference he felt between *a quarter of an hour and ten minutes'* work" | S. Grand, *Twins*, 65,

"Till the bride and bridegroom's return" | Thack., *V. F.*, 169, "The rain drove into the bride and bridegroom's faces" | *ibid.*, 530, "One of the *Prince and Princess Polonia's* splendid evening entertainments" | "The Prince and Princess of Wales's pets" | G. Eliot, *Mull*, ii., 255, "In aunt and uncle Glegg's presence" | Thack., *P.*, i., 242, "Mr. and Lady Poker requested the pleasure of *Major Pendennis and Mr. Arthur Pendennis's* company" | Browning, i., 118, "To *pastor and flock's* contention" | *T. Brown's Sch.*, "The *carpenter and wheelwright's* shop" | *Waugh Tennyson*, 91, "In *Sir Theodore Martin and Professor Aytoun's* 'Bon Gaultier Ballads'".

In the following quotation the *ands* are left out :—

Byron, *Ch. Har.*, iv., 18, "And *Otway, Radcliffe, Schiller, Shakespeare's* art".

Examples with *or* and *nor* (in the last one we have both *or* and *and*) :—

Ch., *G.*, 812, "Cley maad with *hors or mannes* heer" (perhaps doubtful) | Sh., *Cor.*, v., 3, 130, "*Nor childe nor womans* face" | Byron, *Mazeppa*, 5, "Of *vassal or of knight's* degree" | Thack., *V. F.*, 360, "When I see *A. B. or W. T.'s* insufficient acts of repentance" | Darwin, *L. and L.*, ii., 41, "In *a year or two's* time" | Mrs. Ward, *R. Elsm.*, i., 215, "Returning for *an hour or two's*



rest" | *ibid.*, ii., 287, "In a week or ten days' time" | Stedman, *Oxford*, 190, "If only an hour or an hour and a half's work is left till after lunch".

In view of all these examples, it will not be easy to lay down fully definite and comprehensive rules for determining in which cases the group genitive is allowable and in which the *s* has to be affixed to each member; the group construction is, of course, easiest when one and the same name is common to two persons mentioned (*Mr. and Mrs. Brown's* compliments), or when the names form an inseparable group (*Beaumont and Fletcher's* plays; *Macmillan & Co.'s* publications). On the whole, the tendency is towards using the group genitive, wherever no ambiguity is caused by it.

**136.** With personal (*i.e.*, where the genitive case is spoken of, possessive pronouns) no such group inflexion is possible; but some difficulty arises from the difference between conjoint pronouns like *my* and absolute pronouns like *mine*. I give the sentences I have collected without any commentary:—

a.—(*A. R.*, 406, "Min and mines federes luue")  
 | *Sh.*, *Cor.*, v., 6, 4, "In *theirs* and in the commons eares" | *Tp.*, ii., 1, 253, "In *yours* and my discharge" | *Haml.*, v., 2, 341, "*Mine*<sup>1</sup> and my father's death come not vpon thee" | *Milt.*, *Sams.*, 808, "*Mine* and

<sup>1</sup>Of course *mine* may here and in *Ado*, v., 1, 249, be the old conjoint form before a vowel; so also *thine*, *Cor.*, i., 3, 25.

love's prisoner" | Browning, iii., 36, "*Mine* and her souls" | Thack., *Esmond*, ii., 144, "He was intended to represent *yours* and her very humble servant" | Darwin, *Life and L.*, ii., 308, "Without Lyell's, *yours*, Huxley's, and Carpenter's aid".

*b.*—Carlyle, *S. R.*, 71, "To cut *your* and each other's throat" | *ibid.*, *Heroes*, 4, "*Our* and all men's sole duty" | G. Eliot, *Life*, iii., 112, "I enter into *your* and Cara's furniture-adjusting labours" | *ibid.*, iv., 18, "I received *your* and your husband's valued letters" | *ibid.*, 167, "I had heard of *your* and the professor's well-being" | *ibid.*, 266, "With a sense of *your* and Emily's trouble" | Sharp, *Browning*, 143, "On the eve of *her* and her aunt's departure" | Hales, *Longer E. Poems*, 289, "One of *their* and Pope's friends".

*c.*—Carl., *Heroes*, 97, "Turn away *your own* and others' face" | Thack., *P.*, ii., 103, "Trifle with *your own* and others' hearts" | *ibid.*, iii., 34, "I will not forget *my own* or her honour".

*d.*—Ch., *G.*, 1129, "In *your* purs or *myn*" | Mal., 92, "That kny3te *your* enemy and *myn*" | Marl., *Jew*, 969, "For *your* sake and *his*

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*owne*" | Thack., *P.*, ii., 229, "As becomes one of *your* name and *my own*" | G. Eliot, *Mill*, ii., 324, "I measured *your* love and *his* by my own".

*e.*—Ch., *M.*, iii., 194. "The wille of *me* and of *my wyf*" | Thack., *V. F.*, 372, "For the expenses of *herself* and *her little boy*" | Mrs. Ward, *R. Elsm.*, ii., 297, "The shortest way to the pockets of *you* and *me*" | Hardy, *Tess*, 411, "For the sake of *me* and *my husband*".

## VI.

**137.** Finally the genitive ending may be added to **a relative clause**. Dr. Sweet, in his *New Engl. Gr.*, § 1017, mentions as an example of group-inflexion, "*the man I saw yesterday's* son,"<sup>1</sup> "in which the genitive ending is added to an indeclinable adverb, inflecting really the whole group, *the-man-I-saw-yesterday*". But this is generally avoided, at least in literary language; the only example I have met with in print is from the jocular undergraduate language of *Cambridge Trifles* (London, 1881), p. 140:—

"It [a brick] went into *the man who keeps below me's* saucepan".

In English dialects the phenomenon seems to be very widely spread; thus in Scotland (Murray, p.

<sup>1</sup> In his *Words, Logic, and Grammar*, p. 24, "*the man I saw yesterday at the theatre's* father".

166), "*The-màn-ät-ye-mæt-yesterday's* dowchter"; in Cheshire (Darlington, *E. D. S.*, xxi., p. 55), "I've just seen *Jim Dutton, him as went to 'Meriky's weife*," = the wife of J. D., the man who went to America; in Somersetshire (Elworthy, *Gr.*, 15), "That's *the woman what was left behind's* child," i.e., that is the child belonging to the woman who was left behind.

**138.** After thus passing in review all the different kinds of group genitives,<sup>1</sup> it remains for us to find an explanation that will account for all the facts mentioned. It is obvious that the reason of our phenomenon might

<sup>1</sup> In Danish the group genitive is of very frequent occurrence in nearly the same cases where it is found in English (*kongen af Danmarks* magt, *Adam og Evas* børn, etc.). In literary Swedish "*kungens* af Sverge makt," etc., is written, but the spoken language prefers "*kungen af Sverges* makt". In German only very slight traces of the group genitive are found, even such names as *Wolfram von Eschenbach* being not inflected collectively ("die gedichte Wolframs von Eschenbach"). Still in modern family names, where the combination of *von* and a name is not felt as indicating birth-place or estate, the *s* is often, though not exclusively, tacked on to the latter name; Steintal, for instance, on one title-page writes: "Die Sprachwissenschaft W. v. Humboldt's und die Hegelsche Philosophie"; but on another, "Die Sprachphilosophischen Werke Wilhelm's von Humboldt". According to Grimm (*Deutsche Gram.*, ii., 960) the lower classes will sometimes say "des kaiser-von-Oestreich's armee," instead of "des kaisers von Oestreich armee," but it is "rare and ignoble".

be sought either in the nature of the compound group, or in that of the ending and its function.

It might perhaps be urged that the phenomenon was due to the natural instinct taking *the Queen of England* or *King Henry the Eighth* as one inseparable whole, that would allow of no case-ending separating its several elements. The case would then be a parallel to the German treatment of those word-groups which, like *sack und pack*, *grund und boden*, have been fused together to the extent of making it impossible to inflect the former word and say, e.g., *mit sacke und packe* or *grundes und bodens*; indeed, we here, though very rarely, may find something corresponding to the English group genitive; thus, Wieland has "des zu Abdera gehorigen *grund und bodens*".<sup>1</sup> But an inspection of the above collected examples will show that the explanation does not hold good; for in the majority of cases we have not only group-compounds, but also free groups<sup>2</sup> inflected like single words. This feeling of connectedness may

<sup>1</sup> Paul, *Princ. d. Sprachgesch.*, 2nd edit., p. 280.

<sup>2</sup> For the distinction see Sweet, *N. E. G.*, § 440: "Many word-groups resemble sentences in the freedom with which they allow one word to be substituted for another of like grammatical function, or a new word to be introduced. We call such word-groups *free groups*. Thus the free group *for my sake* can be made into *for his sake*. . . . But in such groups as *son-in-law*, *man-of-war*, *bread-and-butter*, *cup-and-saucer*, no such variation is possible, the order of the elements of these groups being as rigidly fixed as in a compound word. We call such combinations *group-compounds*."

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have gone for something in the development of the modern word-order where the genitive of *the Queen of England* is placed before the governing noun, instead of the old "the Queen's crown of England"; and it undoubtedly plays some part in the cases mentioned in § 135 (A and B's); but it gives no satisfactory explanation of the difference between the plural *the Queens of England* and the genitive *the Queen of England's*.

**139.** As the nature of the group fails to give an answer to our question we turn our attention to the ending, and the first thing that strikes us is that we find no trace of the group genitive with any of the O. E. genitive endings *-a*, *-ra*, *-an*, *-e*, *-re*, etc. (cf. § 25) but only with *-(e)s*. It is not till this ending has practically superseded all the other ways of forming the genitive that our phenomenon begins to make its appearance. In other words, the first condition of forming genitives of whole groups as if they were single words is that the manner of formation of genitives should be on the whole uniform. Where the genitive is formed irregularly, as is now only the case with the personal pronouns, we have had until the present day only rudimentary and feeble attempts at group genitives.

**140.** Now, if we were to ask: What is the reason of this regularity in the formation of English noun genitives? then any student that is at all acquainted with modern linguistic theories and methods would be out with the answer: "Why, it is due to analogy;

the *s*-ending has gradually been extended to the whole of the vocabulary, the analogy of those nouns which had an *s*-genitive in O. E. prevailing over the others ”.

Very good ; the answer is obviously correct. And yet it is not entirely satisfactory, for it does not account for the difference observable in many words between the formation of the genitive and that of the plural. In the latter, too, the *s*-ending has been analogically extended in pretty much the same way as in the former ; but how is it that we so often see the irregular plural preserved, whereas the genitive is always regular ? We have the irregular plurals *men*, *children*, *oxen*, *geese*, etc., as against the regular genitives *man's*, *child's*, *ox's*, *goose's*, etc. In the days of Chaucer and Shakespeare the plural and the genitive of most words ending in *f*, e.g., *wife* and *life*, were identical, *wives* and *lives* being said in both cases ; why has the analogy of the nom. sg. been more powerful in the genitive (modern *wife's*, *life's*) than in the plural ?

The only explanation, as far as I can see, lies in the different function of the two endings, if we put a singular word into the plural, the change affects this word only ; its relation to the rest of the proposition remains the same. But if, on the other hand, we put a word in the genitive case which was in the nominative, we change its syntactical relation completely ; for the function of a genitive is that of closely connecting two words.

**141.** There is yet another thing to be noted. The O. E. genitive had many different functions; we may broadly compare its syntax to that of the Latin genitive. We find in Old English possessive, partitive, objective, and descriptive genitives; genitives governed by various adjectives and verbs, etc. And the position of the genitive is nearly as free as it is in Latin. But if you will take the trouble to read a few pages of any Old English prose book, of the Anglo-Saxon chronicle, of King Alfred, or of Ælfric, you will soon observe that where the Old English genitive might be rendered by a genitive in Modern English, it nearly always precedes its noun; where the word-order is different, the old genitive construction has, in the majority of cases, been abandoned. It is a significant fact that the only surviving use of the English genitive is a prepositive one; the word-order "the books my friend's" for "my friend's books" is, and has been for many centuries, as impossible in English as it is frequent in German: "die bücher meines freundes".

**142.** We are now in a position to draw our conclusions. The *s* is always wedged in between the two words it serves to connect; it is, accordingly, felt as belonging nearly as much to the word following it as to the preceding one. Nay, it is now more important that the *s* should come immediately before the governing word than that it should come immediately after the noun which it turns into a genitive case. It is now partly a suffix as of old, partly a



prefix; if we were allowed to coin a new word we should term it an *interposition*.

This peculiar development gives us the clue to the problems mentioned above. If the *s* of the genitive is more loosely connected with the word it belongs to than is the *s* (or other suffix) of the plural, that is the reason why it tolerates no change in the body of the word: the old plural *wives* may remain; but the genitive (originally *wives* also) must be made to agree with the nominative—and so it becomes *wife's*.<sup>1</sup>

And we now see clearly why such groups as *the Queen of England*, when put in the genitive, affix the *s* to the last word of the group, but when put in the plural, to the first.

**143.** Let us look again at some of the above examples; they will enable us to formulate the following three rules:—

When the governing word follows immediately after the genitive, the *s* is never left out;

But this is very frequently the case when the governing word is placed elsewhere (or is understood);

Whenever the *s* is taken from the word to which it should properly belong (according to the old grammar) and shifted on to some other word, this

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<sup>1</sup> In the present orthography, too, the gen. is brought nearer to the spelling of the nom. sg. than the nom. pl. is: gen. *lady's*, *church's*, but pl. *ladies*, *churches*; Shakespeare and Addison would write *ladies* and *churches* for both forms.

latter is always followed immediately by the governing word.

Compare, for instance :—

(O. E.)	<i>unes reades monnes</i>	
	blod ... ..	(Mod.) <i>a red</i> man's blood
(M. E.)	<i>Julianes heste þe</i>	(Mod.) the <i>Emperor</i> Julian's
	<i>amperur</i> ... ..	command
(M. E.)	the <i>kinges meting</i>	
	Pharao ... ..	(Mod.) <i>King</i> Pharao's dream
	at Smith's the <i>bookseller</i> ['s]	at Smith the <i>bookseller</i> 's office
(Ch.)	for your <i>bothes</i> peyne	for <i>both</i> your pains
(Ch.)	kinges blood of <i>Perse</i>	(Marlowe) the <i>King</i> of <i>Perseas</i>
		crowne
	<i>anybody's</i> else ... ..	<i>anybody else's</i> hat
	(it does not matter <i>whose</i> ever	
	it is) ... ..	( <i>whoever's</i> image)
(M. E.)	<i>kyngys doghtur and</i>	(Mod.) a king and emperor's
	<i>emperowre</i> ... ..	daughter
(Sh.)	Her <i>lays</i> were tuned	they were tuned like <i>the lark's</i>
	like <i>the lark</i> ... ..	<i>lays</i>
	(his father is richer than the	(he is richer than the <i>man</i> we
	<i>man's</i> we met yesterday <sup>1</sup> )	met yesterday's father)

**144.** Now, let us sum up the history of the genitive ending *s*.

In the oldest English it is a case-ending like any other found in flexional languages ; it forms together with the body of the noun one indivisible whole, in which it is often impossible to tell where the kernel of the word ends and the ending begins (compare

<sup>1</sup> I have placed those sentences within parentheses which have only a theoretical interest, as neither playing nor having played any noticeable part in natural speech.

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*endes* from *ende* and *heriges* from *here*); the ending is only found in part of the vocabulary, many other genitive endings being found elsewhere.

As to syntax, the meaning and the function of these genitive endings are complicated and rather vague; and there are no fixed rules for the position of the genitive in the proposition.

In course of time we witness a gradual development towards greater regularity and precision. The participative, objective, descriptive and some other functions of the genitive become obsolete; the genitive is invariably put immediately before the word or words it governs: irregular forms disappear, the *s*-ending only surviving as the fittest, so that at last we have one definite ending with one definite function and one definite position. If the syntactical province of the genitive has been narrowed in course of time, the loss—if such it be—has been compensated, and more than compensated, as far as the *s*-ending is concerned, by its being now the sole and absolute sovereign of that province; its power is no longer limited to some masculine and neuter nouns nor to one number only; it rules irrespective of gender and number.

**145.** In an Old English genitive the main ("full") word and the case-forming element are mutually dependent on each other, not only in such genitives as *lufe* or *suna* or *bec* or *dohtor*, but also in the more regular formations in *-es*; one part cannot be separated from the other, and in the case of several words belonging

together, each of them has to be put in the genitive case: *anes reades mannes* | *þære godlican lufe* | *ealra godra ealdra manna weorc*, etc.

In Modern English, on the other hand, the *s* is much more independent: it can be separated from its main word by an adverb such as *else*, by a prepositional clause such as *of England* or even by a relative clause such as *I saw yesterday*; and one *s* is sufficient after such groups as *a red man* or *all good old men*. If, therefore, the chief characteristic of flexional languages, such as Greek and Hebrew, is inseparableness of the constituting elements, it will be seen that the English genitive is in fact no longer a flexional form; the *s* is rather to be compared with those endings in agglutinating languages like Magyar, which cause no change in the words they are added to, and which need only be put once at the end of groups of words;<sup>1</sup> or to the so-called empty words of Chinese grammar. Our present nineteenth century orthography half indicates the independence of the element by separating it from the body of the preceding noun by an apostrophe; there would be no great harm done if the twentieth century were to go the whole length and write, *e.g.*, *my father s house*,

<sup>1</sup> Professor Vilh. Thomsen, in his lectures on the Science of Language some ten years ago, used to illustrate the principle of agglutination by a comparison with the Danish genitive ending *s*, which is in many respects analogous to the English ending.

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*the Queen of England's power, somebody else's hat, etc.*<sup>1</sup>

Compare also Thackeray's lines (*Ballads*, p. 64):—

He lay his cloak upon a branch,  
To guarantee his Lady Blanche  
's delicate complexion.

It is important to notice that here historically attested facts show us in the most unequivocal way a development—not, indeed, from an originally self-existent word to an agglutinated suffix and finally to a mere flexional ending, but the exactly opposite development of what was *an inseparable part of a complicated flexional system to greater and greater emancipation and independence.*

## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER VIII.

"BILL STUMPS HIS MARK," ETC.

**146.** The tendency to turn the genitive ending into an independent word meets with, and is to a certain degree strengthened by, a phenomenon that has originally nothing to do with it; I mean, the **expression of a genitive relation by a common case plus a possessive pronoun.** The best known instance of this is "for *Jesus Christ his* sake" in the Common Prayer Book.

<sup>1</sup> It is true that this spelling would perhaps in some cases suggest a false pronunciation, for *phonetically* the ending still belongs to the preceding rather than to the following word, as its triple pronunciation [s, z, iz, § 151] is determined by the final sound of the former.

This peculiar idiom is not confined to English: it is extremely common in Danish, Norwegian and Swedish dialects, in Middle and Modern Low German, in High German (Goethe . "Ist doch keine menagerie So bunt wie *meiner Lili ihre!*"), in Magyar, etc. In English the phenomenon has been noticed by many grammarians;<sup>1</sup> and if any one wishes to see other or more instances than those from which I have tried to form an idea of the origin and character of the idiom, it is to their works that I must refer him.

**147.** In most cases the phenomenon is a form of that anacoluthia which I have already had occasion to mention (see § 60), and which consists in the speaker or writer beginning his sentence without thinking exactly of the proper grammatical construction of the word that first occurs to him, so that he is subsequently obliged to use a correcting pronoun. As this want of forethought is common everywhere and at all times, we find the grammatical irregularity in many languages,<sup>2</sup> and it is naturally very frequent when a lengthy clause is introduced: it is also often

<sup>1</sup>Mätzner, *Grammatik*, iii., 236; Fr. Koch, *Gramm.*, ii., 249; Abbott, *Shak. Gr.*, § 217; Storm, *Engl. Philol.*, 1881, 262; Eickenkel, *Streifzüge*, 109, and Paul's *Grundriss*, i., 909; Kellner, *Blanch.*, xxxvi., and *Hist. Outl. of Engl. Syntax*, § 308; Franz, *Engl. Studien*, xvii., 388.

<sup>2</sup>One French example from Bourget, *Cruelle Enigme*, 18: "Elles qui vivaient dans une simplicité de veuves sans espérance, et qui n'auraient pour rien au monde modifié quoique ce fût à l'antique mobilier de l'hôtel, *leur* sentiment pour Hubert leur avait soudain révélé le luxe et le confort moderne".

resorted to where a foreign name is introduced that does not conform to the native declensions.

The possessive pronoun is often, for some reason or other, separated from its antecedent :—

*A. R.*, 82, "*þe þe! swuch fulðe speteð ut in eni ancre eare me schulde dutten his muð*" | *Ch.*, *L. G. W.*, 2180, "*Thise false lovers, poison be hir bane!*" | *M. P.*, v., 99, "*The wery hunter, sleping in his bed, To wode again his mynde goth anon*" | *Sh.*, *R. III.*, iii., 2, 58, and *Wint. T.*, iii., 2, 98, quoted in § 60 | *R. III.*, i., 4, 217, "*Alas! for whose sake did I that ill deed? For Edward, for my brother, for his sake.*"

But we are here chiefly concerned with those cases in which the possessive pronoun followed immediately on its antecedent :—

*Oros*, 8, "*Asia & Europe hiera landgemircu togædre licgað . . . Affrica & Asia hiera landgemircu onginnað of Alexandria*" | *ibid.*, 12, "*Nilus seo ea hire æwielne is neh þæm clife þære Readan Sæs*" | *Malory*, 126, "This lord of this castel his name is syr Damas, and he is the falsest knyght that lyueth" | *Sh.*, *Tp.*, v., 1, 268, "*This mishapen knaue, his mother was a witch*" | *Scott*, *Lay of the Last Minst.*, i., 7, "But *he, the chieftain of them all, His sword hangs rusting on the wall*" | *Rossetti*, *Poet. W.*, 164, "*For every man on God's ground, O King, His death grows up from*

his birth" | Tennyson, 616, "*The great tragedian*, that had quenched herself In that assumption of the bridesmaid, she that loved me, *our true Edith*, *her* brain broke with over acting".<sup>1</sup>

Ch., *M.*, iii., 145, "For sothly *he that precheth to hem that liste not to heere his wordes*, *his sermounhem* anoyeth" | Num., xvii., 5 (Revised Version), "It shall come to pass, that *the man whom I shall choose*, *his rod* shall bud" (Auth. Vers. . . . "that the man's rod whom I shall choose, shall blossom").

The similarity between this sentence from the Revised Version and "the man I saw yesterday's father" is conspicuous.

**148.** There are, however, other sources from which this genitive construction by means of possessive pronouns may arise. First I shall mention what Einkenkel thinks the sole origin of it, *viz.*, the construction after some verbs meaning to *take* or *rob*, where a dative + a possessive pronoun very nearly amounts to the same thing as a gen., as will be seen in the following instances:—

*A. R.*, 286, "þet tu wult . . . reauen *God his* strence" | *ibid.*, 300, "Schrift reaued *þe*

<sup>1</sup> A curious example with the pronoun of the first person is Sh., *Tp.*, i, 2, 109, "*Me (poore man) my* Librarie was dukedome large enough"; if we do not here take *me* as a dative = *to me*, we have something like an apology for the missing genitive *a* of "*I poor man*," cf. § 123.



*ueonde his lond* " | Malory, 110, "Syr Tor  
alyghte and toke *the dwarf his* glayue".

But even if we include in this rule other verbs of a kindred nature, as in :—

*A. S. Chron., A., 797, "Her Romane Leone  
þæm papan his tunge forcurfon & his eagan  
astunge,"*

the instances of this particular construction are not numerous enough to account for the frequency of the *his*-genitive. Language is here, as elsewhere, too complex for us to content ourselves with discovering the source of one of the brooklets that go to forming a big river. Looking round for other sources we see that other verbs as well as "rob," etc., may be followed by a dative + *his*, nearly equivalent to a genitive (*to ask a man his pardon* is nearly equivalent to *asking a man's pardon*) ; compare also the following examples, in none of which a substitution of a genitive for the dative + the possessive pronoun would involve a change in the meaning :—

*A. R., 84, "He mid his fikelunge & mid his  
preisunge heleð & wrihð mon his sunne"* (he  
with his flattery and with his praise con-  
cealeth and covereth from man (for a man)  
his sin = conceals a man's sin) | Byron,  
v., 260 (*Sardanap.*, iv., 1), "and there at  
all events secure *My nephews and your sons  
their lives*" | Hughes, *Tom Br.*, 5, "There is  
enough of interest and beauty to last *any  
reasonable man his life*" | Tennyson, 372,

“*Merlin . . . had built the king his havens, ships, and halls*”.

**149.** In yet other instances it is a nominative that combines with *his* to form our quasi-genitive. When we read in Chaucer manuscripts, for instance :—

“Heer beginnith the *Chanouns yeman his tale*,”

Prof. Skeat finds it necessary to warn us: “The rubric means, ‘Here the *Canon’s Yeoman* begins his tale’. The word *tale* is not to be taken as a nominative case.” But it will be observed that it does not matter much for the understanding of the phrase as a whole whether we take it as a nominative or an accusative; Prof. Skeat may be right in thinking that in these rubrics *begin* was originally a transitive verb; but as in most other mediæval rubrics *begin* was taken intransitively (the subject being the title of the book), an analogous interpretation would naturally present itself in instances like the above, and then *yeman his* would be the equivalent of a genitive before *tale*. That some, at least, of the old scribes were not of Prof. Skeat’s opinion, appears from the rubric found in MS. Arch. Seld., B, 114 :—

“Here endith the man of lawe his tale. And next *folwith the shipman his* prolog.”

For it is here out of the question to construe, “And next the shipman follows his prologue;” this, then, is undoubtedly an instance of the *his*-genitive.

**150.** Sprung as it is, then, from various sources, this makeshift genitive now converges with and meets

the originally totally different interpositional descendant from the old flexional *s*-genitive, so that the two formations become often practically indistinguishable.<sup>1</sup> The similarity is of a purely phonetic nature; *his* would, of course, be pronounced with weak stress, and in unstressed words in the middle of a sentence *h* is scarcely if at all audible (as in the rapid pronunciation of "he took *his* hat," etc.; compare also *it* for older *hit*, and 's for *has*). Thus, *þe bissop his broþer*, etc., in the B-text of Layamon, may be only another way of writing *bissopis* or *bissopes*.<sup>2</sup>

**151.** When, in the fifteenth century or so, most of the weak *e*'s disappeared in pronunciation, the genitive ending *-es* [-iz] was differentiated into the three forms which it still has:—

- [s] after voiceless sounds (bishop's);
- [z] after voiced sounds (king's), and
- [iz] after hisses (prince's).

But the same change happened with the possessive pronoun, as will be seen very frequently in Shakespeare:—

*All's*, ii., 2, 10, "Put *off's* cap, *kiss his* hand" | *Cor.*,  
ii., 2, 160, "May they *perceiue's* intent" |  
*ibid.*, ii., 3, 160, "*At's* heart" | 171, "*For's*

<sup>1</sup> Compare such accidental convergings of not-related words as that of *sorrow* and *sorry*.

<sup>2</sup> Perhaps we have *Venus his* written for *Venuses* in Ch., *M. P.*, 4, 31, "The thridde hevenes lord (Mars) . . . hath wonne Venus his love"; or is *his love* = "his beloved one," in apposition to Venus?

country" | v., 3, 159, "*To's* mother" | *Meas.*, i., 4, 74, "*For's* execution," etc. | Marlowe, *Jew*, 1651, "*on's* nose" (cf. A. Wagner's note to his edit. of the same play, 294).

Compare the treatment of the verbal form *is*: *that's*, *there's*, *this is*. In Elizabethan English, *it* was treated similarly. *I saw't*, *for't*, *do't*, *upon't*, *done't*, etc. So also *us* (comp. mod. *let's*): *upon's*, *among's*, *upbraid's*, *behold's*, etc.

**152.** Here I add a few examples of the *his*-genitive from Chaucer down to the vulgar speech or burlesque style of our days:—

Ch., *L. G. W.*, 2593, "*Mars his* venim is adoun" | Sh., *Hamlet*, ii., 2, 512, "Neuer did the Cyclop hammers fall On *Mars his* armours" | *Tw. N.*, iii., 3, 26, "'Gainst the *Count his* gallies" | *2 H. IV.*, ii., 4, 308, "Art not thou *Poines his* brother?" | *L. L. L.*, v., 2, 528, "A man of *God his* making" (folio: God's) | Thack., *Pend.*, ii., 6 (a housekeeper says), "In *George the First his* time" | Gilbert, *Bab Ball*, 36, "Seven years I wandered—Pata-gonia. China, Norway, Till at last I sank exhausted At a *pastrycook his* door-way".

**153.** To the popular feeling the two genitives were then identical, or nearly so: and as people could not take the fuller form as originating in the shorter one, they would naturally suppose the *s* to be a shortening

of *his* ; this is accordingly a view that we often find either adopted or contested, as will appear from the following quotations, which might easily be augmented :—

HUME, *Orthographie*, 1617, ed. by Wheatley, p. 29, "This s sum haldes to be a segment of his, and therfoer now almost al wrytes his for it as if it were a corruption. But it is not a segment of his : 1. because his is the masculin gender, and this may be foeminin ; as, A mother's love is tender ; 2. because his is onelie singular, and this may be plural ; as, al men's vertues are not knawen."

MAITTAIRE, *Eng. Gr.*, 1712, p. 28, "The genitive . . . is expressed by -s at the end of the word : as, *the childrens bread, the daughters husband, its glory*. The s, if it stands for *his*, may be marked by an apostrophus : *e.g.*, for Christ's sake : and sometimes *his* is spoken and written at length, *e.g.*, *for Christ his sake*."

ADDISON, *Spect.*, No. 135, "The same single letter [s] on many occasions does the office of a whole word, and represents the *his* and *her* of our forefathers. There is no doubt but the ear of a foreigner, which is the best judge in this case, would very much disapprove of such innovations, which indeed we do ourselves in some measure, by retain-

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ing the old termination in writing, and in all the solemn offices of our religion.”<sup>1</sup>

ENQUIRE WITHIN, 1885, § 208, “The apostrophe (') is used to indicate the combining of two words in one, as *John's book*, instead of *John, his book*”.

In its struggle for an independent existence, the *s*-interposition seemed likely to derive great assistance from the concurrence of the *his*-construction. But the coincidence was not to last long. On the one hand, the contraction of the weak *his* seems to have been soon given up, the vowel being reintroduced from the fully stressed form, even where the *h* was dropped (*he took 'is hat*) ; on the other hand, the limited signification of the possessive pronoun counteracted the complete fusion which would undoubtedly have taken place, if *his* had been common to all genders and to both numbers, instead of being confined to the masc. (and in former centuries the neuter) sg. A formation like “Pallas her glass” (quoted by Abbott from Bacon) does not fit in with the rest of the system of the language, and “Pallas his glass” would jar upon English ears because *his* is too much felt as a pronoun denoting sex.

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<sup>1</sup> This remark of Addison's gives us the clue to the retention of “for Jesus Christ his sake” in the Prayer Book ; it is no doubt the old syllabic ending *Christes* remained unaltered after the *e* had generally become silent, on account of the accustomed rhythmic enunciation ; a better way of spelling it would therefore be *Christès* as in *blessèd*, etc.



## ADVERSATIVE CONJUNCTIONS<sup>1</sup>

THE etymologist will generally consider his task fulfilled and his mission accomplished, once he has succeeded in finding a word in an ancient language which, from the point of view of phonetics and signification, agrees with the word he is desirous of explaining, so that he can set forth the reasons for the changes it has undergone in the course of time or, at least, point out similar instances in the same or other languages. The question why an older word should have been ousted by a newer is less frequently raised and yet it often involves problems which it is worth while probing into more deeply.

This article will deal with a series of adversative conjunctions on whose origin sufficient light would seem to have been thrown—enough at any rate to satisfy the etymological dictionaries in general use. In a recent short article on 'Le renouvellement des conjonctions', (*Annuaire de l'École pratique des Hautes Etudes* 1915—1916), Meillet has discussed several of the usual causes that lead to conjunctions being replaced in the course of time, in that they are no longer felt to be forcible or bulky enough: he has not, however, specifically grouped together the words which will be commented on in this article and has therefore not discovered the ultimate reason why just those words and those forms have ousted the older.

We have first the familiar fact that, in the Romanic languages, the Latin *sed* is replaced by *magis*, Ital. *ma*, Sp. *mas*, Fr. *mais*. The change in meaning causes no difficulty; from 'more' it is no great distance to 'sooner' which, like Germ. *vielmehr* and Eng. *rather*, is

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<sup>1</sup> In Danish, *Nogle Men-ord*, in *Studier tillegnede Esaias Tegnér* 1918. Here translated with some additions and slight alterations.



well adapted for use in statements implying correction or contrast. (As regards this change see Tobler, *Vermischte beiträge*, 3, 2. ausg. p. 78 and Richter, *Zeitschr. f. rom. phil.* 39, 656).

Next we have the Scandinavian *men* which came into existence in the 15th century. The explanation usually given, that this word arose through a combination of *meden* (now *medens*), in the shortened form *men*, (cf. *mens*), and Low Germ. *men* (= Fris. *men*), 'aber, sondern', seems unexceptionable.

In early Middle English, at the time when OE *ac* was still in use, (*ac, ah, aub*), and *but* (OE *butan*), had not yet come to be extensively used, we find a word *me* which occurs in a few texts only, Ancrene Riwe and some of the 'Katherine group'. According to NED this word is 'of obscure origin' and its connexion with Scand., MDu. and MLG *men* is regarded as doubtful. It is described there as a particle, (exclamatory or adversative), employed to introduce a question or less commonly a statement—'lo, now, why'. In Mätzner's *Wörterbuch*, where full quotations are given, it is translated 'aber' and this translation seems to fit in all the contexts in which the word occurs.

As far as the MLG word is concerned it is explained by means of *niwan* meaning 'only, merely', arising from the negative *ni* and *wan* 'lacking' (cf. ON *vanr*). 'Die bedeutung "aber" hat sich aus "ausgenommen" entwickelt' (Falk & Torp). The assimilation *nw > m* is easy to account for from the phonetic point of view (on this see among others Schröder, *Indogerm. Forschungen* 22.195 and 24.25).

We meet with the same sound shift in the third word, Dutch *maar*, Old Fris. *mâr* from *en wâre*, 'it could not be', the same combination which has become *nur* in German.

Thus we have three distinct ways of arriving at the adversative meaning, in none of which those familiar with the changes of meaning of words in different languages will find anything unusual. But why should new words have been resorted to? Were the old not good enough?

Here I shall point out two features common to all these conjunctions. The first is syntactical: all three are placed at the beginning

of a sentence; in this they differ from synonyms such as the Latin *autem*, or Germ. *aber*, which can follow one or more words. The second is phonetical: *magis*, *men* and *maar*, in contradistinction to the words they oust, begin with *m*. We find the same two features outside the Aryan languages in words with the same meaning, 'but', concerning whose origin I can say nothing, Finnish *mutta*<sup>1</sup>, Santal *menkhan*. (Heuman, *Gramm. studie öfver Santal-språket* 69). We may compare also Kutenai *ma* 'but' (Boas, *Kutenai Tales*, Bureau of American Ethnol. 59, 1918, p. 94), *mi'ksa'n* 'but' (ib. p. 98).

The explanation is undoubtedly as follows. The sound [m] is produced by keeping the lips pressed tightly together, while the tongue lies quietly in the lower half of the mouth and the soft palate is lowered so that the air can escape freely through the nostrils. Now this is the characteristic position taken up by the organs of speech of a man who is deliberating a matter without saying anything—the only difference being that his vocal chords also remain quiet while in the enunciation of [m] they are set vibrating.

How often it happens that one wants to say something, even knows that one must and will, but is not quite clear as to *what* one is going to say. At this moment of uncertainty, when the thought is being born but is not yet clothed in words, one nevertheless begins the activity of speech: the vocal chords are set vibrating, while the lungs expel the air and, as the upper organs are precisely in the position described, the result is [m]. This is written *hm!*, even if there is no [h] (or more correctly voiceless or breathed [m]), before the voiced [m], and this is just the formless interjection of

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<sup>1</sup> *Vilhelm Thomsen* wrote to me about this word, (April 4, 1910) 'As far as I know *mutta* occurs only in Finnish and, borrowed from Finnish, in Lappish *mutto*. It is not even found in Esthonian (*aga*), still less in any of the other more remote Finno-Ugrian languages. In all probability it is connected with *muu* 'other', although I am not quite sure how it came to be formed. The particles often present remarkable developments. Some individual dialects are said to show a variant I do not know, *muutta*, with long *u*, but whether this is a legacy from the original form or is due to analogy for example with *muutoin* 'otherwise' or some similar word I do not know.'

protest.<sup>1</sup> Not infrequently an [m] of this kind comes immediately before a real word so that we get for example, Dan. *mja*, Eng. *myes* as a hesitant objection. (See Anker Larsen, *Vises st.* 411 M-jo, jo det kan man godt sige | ib. 149 M-nej | Hamsun, *Segelfoss* 38 M-nej | Garborg, *Mannf.* 91 Mark Oliv stauk upp haaret og var alvorleg; *mja* —, sa han | Shaw, *Misalliance*. 154: M'yes | Galsworthy, *Swan Song* 183 M'yes | Rose Macaulay, *Potterism* 50 M'm yes | Galsworthy, *Maid-in-W.* 43 M-no.

Now we can understand why words beginning with *m* are so frequently chosen as adversative conjunctions. The starting point is this sound and then recourse is had to some word or other that has some sort of meaning and which just happens to begin with the same sound: *ma*, *mais*, *maar*. The Danish *men* may well be an [m] that has slid into the old conjunction *en* in the same way as *mja* is *m+ja*. This is in no way incompatible with the notion that some of the first to use the word had in mind *men* = *meden*, while others thought of Low German *men*. We have thus three etymologies for this word which, far from being mutually exclusive, have co-operated in rendering it popular and common. (Incidentally, may it not be possible in the case of other words for which etymologists suggest various explanations so that one writer challenges the interpretation put forward by the other, that a similar point of view holds good so that both interpretations are correct, in that the word arose in one way amongst one group of speakers and in another amongst another?).

In the combinations *mais oui*, *mais non*, so frequently met with in French, is it not possible that, in some instances at least,<sup>2</sup> it is only this deliberative [m] that is being uttered, before the speaker is certain whether he means 'yes' or 'no'? *Mais oui* is very frequently

<sup>1</sup> Other ways of writing this interjection *hem*, *hum* (see NED); *Um* (Kaye Smith, *Howe of Aland* 295-300). *Mm* (Lawrence, *Ladybird* 126 cf. 194). This word like a great many others is ably discussed in Hjalmar Ideforss, *De primare interjektionerna i nystenskan*. I Lund, 1928, but the author seems rather too much inclined to suppose conscious literary loans from one language to another and to underestimate the essential uniformity of human nature in all nations. What is taken over may only be the fashion of writing down sounds which have been pronounced and heard from time immemorial.

<sup>2</sup> In other cases *mais oui*, *mais non*, is emphatic as in *jolie, mais jolie!* (for this observation I am indebted to Schuchardt).

pronounced [mwɪ] and not [mɛwi]. In the same way remarks are often introduced by [māfɛ], written in books as *mais enfin*, though this expression does not always convey the full force of objection that, strictly speaking, is implied in the word *mais*.

The *ma* meaning 'but' found in modern Greek and Serbian is explained as a borrowing from Italian, in spite of the fact that contact between the Italians and their eastern neighbours has not otherwise been close enough to lead to the adoption of form words from Italian by these peoples. But precisely this word has found its way into these languages because it began with the universal deliberative [m]—or is it possible that it came into being spontaneously in these languages? The Roumanian of Transylvania also has a *ma* 'but', according to a communication by Sandfeld. The Nigger English of Surinam shows a *ma* with the same meaning (in the British Bible Society's translation, and in *Pikin spelle en leri-boekoe vo da evangelische broeder-gemeente*, Paramaibo, 1849). Since, however, H. R. Wullschlägel in *Deutsch-negerenglisches wörterbuch* (Löbau 1856) and H. C. Focke in *Neger-englisch W'oordeenboek* (Leiden 1885) have both the forms *ma* and *mara*, it is most likely that they are derived from the Dutch *maar*. In *Die nywe Testament ka set over in die Creols taal*, (Copenhagen 1818), the form *maer* is used.

An attempt at another word for 'but' beginning with *m* is found in the Greek *mállon*, which Bréal has noted once only in a tabula devotionis (*Mém. Soc. Linguist.* 7. 187). The change of meaning is precisely the same as in the case of the Romanic *magis*.

If in English the word *but* meaning originally 'without' has taken the place of OE *ac*, the change of meaning is the same as that in the Swedish *utan*. Yet I am inclined to think that the closing of the lips at the beginning of the word has been a contributory factor, (*mbut* is not unknown), even if the soft palate is raised to pronounce *b*, so that in this instance the point of departure is not the position of complete rest. Something similar applies to the Spanish *pero*, Ital. *però* (from Lat. *per hoc*). The French *bah* is frequently used in a manner suggestive of repudiation, and similar interjections are met with in many languages. Berneker, *Slav. etym. wb.* p. 36, is scarcely justified in differentiating between the *ba* ('ja, freilich, allerdings'),

that occurs in several Slavic languages and which he associates with avest. *ba*, 'partikel der betreuung und hervorhebung', etc., and Russ., Bulg., Serb. *ba*, 'ausruf des staunens', which is taken to be a 'primäre interjektion wie nhd. *ba*, frz. *bah*, osm. *ba*'. These words are identical and serve as more decisive subordinate forms of the rather more uncertain and hesitant *ma*.

There are other words beginning with *m* which one is tempted to mention in this connexion since they express something similar to the reflective, half or wholly reluctant [m]; especially verbs like E. *mope*, Dan. *måbe*. Further E. *mumble*, *mump* and *mutter*, Dan. *mumle*, Lat. *murmurare*, as a means of expressing partly weakly spoken sounds and partly the unformed objection. We have many similar words with related meaning: Dan. *murre*, *mukke*, Germ. *mucken*, *mucksen*, *muckern*, adj. *mucksch*, *muckig*, 'peevish, grumbl-ing': in Dan. we have, with the same meaning, the adj. *mut* with its subordinate form *but*; otherwise *m*- and *b*- are not interchangeable in this way: we can understand their being so in the case of these words because here the most important thing is to have the lips closed at the beginning of the words. English has the word *moody* with the same signification; here etymologists no doubt refer it to OE *mōdig* and explain that *mōd* means 'state of mind' generally, not only 'courage' as Dan. *mod*, but also a distinctly unwilling mood. Yet that *moody* should have come to mean 'sulky, sullen' and thus acquired the same unfavourable shade of meaning as Dan. *mut* is undoubtedly connected with the use of [m] commented on in this article. We may also compare Eng. *mum*, 'silence, silent, quiet' (originally, not as is stated in NED an 'inarticulate sound made with closed lips', but rather, the sound emerging when one begins to speak first with closed lips, then opens them and at once breaks off speech and closes them again), with the remarkable *mumchance* which is used like the Dan. *mut*, (Locke, *Ordeyne* 174 I sat mumchance and depressed).<sup>1</sup>

Dan. *mukke* leads us to *muk* used in the negative *ikke et muk* 'not the slightest sound', Germ. *keinen mucks* and thence again

<sup>1</sup> Cf. H. Petersson, *Vergl. slav. wortstudien* 50 lautgebürde *mu* (1) mundverschliessen, Gr. *mūō*, (2) leises bewegen der lippen oder ein murmeln — Cf. further E. *muzzle*, Fr. *museau*, OF *musel*.

to Fr. *mot*, Ital. *motto*, Gr. *múthos*, all of which have acquired a more exalted and complete meaning than that contained in the Danish and German half-words.

The reason that Dan. *mon* (almost always the first word in a sentence) from being a form of the verb *munu*, has come to be an interrogative particle is undoubtedly the fact that, with its initial *m*, the word was well adapted to begin a dubious, hesitant question: *mon han kommer?* (originally ... *komme*) is rather more uncertain than *kommer han?*, and is thus quite naturally introduced by a hesitant [m]. We may compare the Gr. *môn* with the same meaning, used in introducing a question, even if, as seems probable, the Greek word is derived from *mē oân* and is thus quite different in origin from the Danish: the similarity between the two cannot be ignored, it is of the same kind as that between Ital. *ma* and Dutch *maar*.

While in the instances already cited we have an initial closing of the lips, in American *nope* [no·ʊp], [no·p] and *yeɪp* [jɛp], we find a final closing of the lips of somewhat similar value, usually without audible explosion, but I do not clearly understand what feeling prompts the use of these variations of 'no' and 'yes', although I have often heard them. In literature they are found not only in modern American, but also recently in British authors.

In the beginning of an utterance we have not only [m], but also [n], since in moments of silence the tongue often rests in the advanced closed position while the nasal passage stands open; whether at the same time the lips are closed or open does not matter at the moment that the vocal chords are set in vibration, the audible result is in any case [n]. This is used in the same way as [m] before *yes*: E. *nyes*, Dan. *nja*, cf. the author's *Fonetik* p. 272, *Lehrbuch der Phon.* 5.62. Now it is worth noting how many words meaning the same thing as *men* there are which begin with *n*: Russ. *no* and specially French *néanmoins*, Ital. *nondimeno*, Sp. *no obstante*, Germ. *nichtsdestoweniger*, long awkward words whose length is just adapted to give time for the coming objection to take shape, since, when one wishes to contradict the person with whom one is talking, it is important not to hurry, but to weigh one's words lest they give offence!

The last mentioned words contain the negation as the first element and since negative words begin with *m* and *n* not only in our own family of languages (*ne*, *me*, etc.), but also in many others, Magyar, Eskimo, Sumerian, Duala, Arab, Egyptian, Chinese, we are surely justified in seeing in this an allied outcome of the same tendency to want to say something with the organs of speech in a resting position. Only in the case of the words just cited the word issuing is to a still greater extent a querulous, repudiating one, originally probably an expression of refusal, disgust, aversion, which is also conveyed by means of what we describe as 'turning up one's nose'.

In the last sentence I have said nothing new, but I do not think that the words for 'but' alluded to in the beginning of this article have been accounted for by others in the way that they are here. In conclusion I will point out that my explanation is not based on sound symbolism in the ordinary sense of the term. In my opinion the words are certainly in one sense natural words but entirely different from 'onomatopoeias' or echo-words: they are the usual type of words, (conventional), but have come to be used in this special way because they contained an element deep-rooted in human nature. They may consequently be regarded as secondarily natural words. The ancient Greek philosophers debated whether words arose *phusei* or *thesei* and could only imagine the one or the other origin, we see here in one individual province a union: the words have arisen both *phusei* and *thesei*.

— *Linguistica*, 1933.

## THE ROLE OF THE VERB

What is the role played in the economy of speech by the verb as opposed to the other parts of speech? C. Alphonso Smith (*Studies in Engl. Syntax*, 1906, p. 3ff.) says that "verbs denote activity and change: they are bustling and fussy". In proof of this he adduces canto XI of Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, "in which the omission of the verb in the principal clauses adds an element of calm that could not otherwise be secured":

Calm is the morn without a sound,  
Calm as to suit a calmer grief.  
And only thro' the faded leaf  
The chestnut pattering to the ground:

Calm and deep peace on this high wold,  
And on these dews that drench the furze,  
And all the silvery gossamers  
That twinkle into green and gold

Calm and still light on yon great plain  
That sweeps with all its autumn bowers,  
And crowded farms and lessening towers,  
To mingle with the bounding main:

Calm and deep peace in this wide air,  
These leaves that redden to the fall;  
And in my heart, if calm at all.  
If any calm, a calm despair.

Calm on the seas, and silver sleep,  
And waves that sway themselves in rest,  
And dead calm in that noble breast  
Which heaves but with the heaving deep.

In these five stanzas, as Smith remarks, the only verb of a principal clause is the second word of the first line, *is*.

And he goes on: "Compare now the brooding quietude of those stanzas with the jerkiness of these lines, so filled with verbs:

I hear the noise about thy keel;  
I hear the bell struck in the night;  
I see the cabin-window bright;  
I see the sailor at the wheel."

This remark is very interesting, and the illustration from Tennyson is admirably chosen and highly suggestive. There can be no doubt that quietude has scarcely ever found a finer expression than in the stanzas quoted. Yet, on further reflection I am inclined to think that our grammarian has wrongly interpreted the syntactical



character of that passage, and that the exquisite effect of calmness is not at all due to the absence of any verb in itself, but to something else.

First, it must be observed that it is not always that the omission of verbs has that effect. Take the following sentences from a totally different sphere:

"Then rapidly to the door, down the steps, out into the street, and without looking to right or left into the automobile, and in three minutes to Wall Street with utter disregard of police regulations and speed limits."

Not a single verb: yet the impression is no one of absolute calm. It may even be said that the rapidity of movement is accentuated more than would be the case if all the verbs were added: "Then he ran rapidly to the door, jumped down the steps, rushed out into the street, etc." A comparison of the two passages would, I think, justify us in saying that the omission of a verb of repose, (*is*, etc.), as in Tennyson's stanzas, heightens the effect of quietude, and that the omission of a verb of movement heightens the effect of disquietude. Compare also Longfellow's fine stanza ("Paul Revere's Ride"):

A hurry of hoofs in a village street,  
A shape in the moonlight, a bulk in the dark.  
And beneath, from the pebbles, in passing, a spark  
Struck out by a steed flying fearless and fleet.

Now then, how is this twofold nature of the omission to be explained?

It will be seen at once that Alphonso Smith's description of verbs as active and bustling may be true of the majority of verbs, but not of all; we have verbs of repose no less than verbs of motion. Second, it is to be noted that the distinction between verbs and substantives has nothing to do with such ideas as activity and change. The fundamental idea of the substantive *movement* is the same as that of the verb *move*, and so is that of *observation* and *observe*, *reliance* and *rely*, *error* and *err*, etc. The only difference between the substantives *look*, *dream*, *ebb*, *limit*, *effect*, *repose* and the verbs *look*, *dream*, *ebb*, *limit*, *effect*, *repose* is their role in the sentence, but their signification is the same. The distinction between them is a purely grammatical one: one class of words is inflected in one way, the other in another, and one class is intended to be the subject, object, etc. of a sentence, or to be used after a preposition, while the other is fit to be the "predicate" of a sentence.

If any one class of words is more than the others productive of the effect of quietude, it must be the adjectives, because most adjectives are descriptive, and description is opposed to action. Just as in a novel descriptions of the landscape or the weather or

the dress of the various characters mean a slowing down of the speed of the story, thus also in a sentence the occurrence of an adjective generally means a retardation, and those authors whose pages abound with adjectives, will be found to be contemplative natures moving leisurely and deliberately and lingeringly. The effect of Tennyson's stanzas is really due less to the omission of the verb *is*, than to the preponderance given to the adjective *calm* through its being placed repeatedly at the very beginning of the stanza, at a place where it cannot possibly be overlooked

It used to be a kind of dogma with the older school of comparative philologists that the verb represented the highest growth of linguistic development, and that those languages were more or less barbaric (or "formlos") which did not distinguish verbs from substantives in the manner the (old) Arian languages do. Wherever a language presented the frequent phenomenon that the personal endings of the verb agreed with possessive pronouns rather than with personal pronouns, this was taken as proof positive that such a language had not yet attained the same height of development as Sanskrit or Greek, and that it possessed no real verb. It would not be difficult to show that very much of what was taken by Schleicher and others to be characteristic of barbaric speech in this respect as indicating the absence of real verbs finds its exact parallels in English and in that language is of quite recent growth. As we have no doubt that English possesses real verbs, the conclusion seems warranted that the old theory must be wrong and that those 'primitive' languages did possess real verbs. That absence of verbs does not always go hand in hand with primitivity, is well brought out in an interesting paper by Hermann Jacobi, *Über den nominalen Stil des wissenschaftlichen Sanskrits* (Indogerm Forsch. 14, 236ff.).

"When languages begin to grow old (alternde Sprachen) they tend, he says, to nominal expressions, especially when they have for a long time served as vehicles for scientific thinking. It seems possible to express ideas with greater precision and adequacy by means of nouns than by means of the more pictorial verbs (die mehr der Sphäre der Anschauung sich nähernden Verba). The more abstract therefore thinking grows as mental culture ripens, the more extensively a language will make use of nouns."

I have elsewhere (*Progress in Language* p 132) objected to the application of such terms as 'old age' and 'decrepitude' to languages; but in the case Jacobi refers to such terms seem really adequate. "Sanskrit had become the privileged vehicle for the higher education in India; it had become unintelligible to the lower classes of the people and had ceased to be used for all purposes of human life. While Sanskrit was increasingly turned off from the practical details of everyday life and was simultaneously made more and more to serve the interests of higher intellectual life, ab-

stract methods of diction were more and more needed as the sphere of ideas to be expressed became narrower and narrower." and that led naturally to the preference for substantives.

I think the difference between the two kinds of style can be illustrated by comparing my English translation of the last sentence with the German original: „Mit der zunehmenden Abkehr von der gemeinen Alltäglichkeit des Daseins und der damit Hand in Hand gehenden Zuwendung zum höheren geistigen Leben stieg in dem sich also einengenden Ideenkreise, welchem das Sanskrit als Ausdrucksmittel diente, das Bedürfnis begrifflicher Darstellung " German scientific prose sometimes approaches the Sanskrit style described by Jacobi. The latter was made worse through the influence of the Sūtra style; for the Sūtras, being destined to be memorized, had from of old tended towards the greatest possible condensation, sentences being often reduced to substantival skeletons and verbs being left to be 'understood' from the context. The contents of the predicate were rendered through an abstract substantive, and consequently the subject of the original sentence had to stand in the genitive case. If there is any verb at all, it has the most general signification, such as *be*, *exist*, etc. It would be too long to describe the various features of this style, in which various cases of long compound nouns take the place of subordinate clauses, etc. What interests us here is not the special Sanskrit development, but the fact that by turning what is generally expressed by finite verbs into a nominal expression we get a greater degree of abstraction, due among other things to the fact that some of the life-giving elements of the verb (mood, person) disappear in the verbal substantive. While this nominal style may therefore serve the purposes of highly abstract philosophy, where, however, it sometimes does nothing but disguise simple thoughts in the garb of profound wisdom, it does not fit natural everyday life. This, too, should make us wary in accepting an interpretation of verbal forms of primitive savages, according to which these are represented as saying "my going" instead of "I go".

While, thus, one aspect of the question about the relation of verbs to other word classes is that by turning verbal ideas into substantives an abstract and abstruse diction is produced, we have a totally different effect produced by the omission of the verb in another kind of phrases.

If we compare the German proverb „Ende gut, alles gut" with the corresponding proverb in other languages, "All is well that ends well," "Tout est bien qui finit bien," "Når enden er god, er alting godt," we see that the verb-less expression is not at all more abstract than the others; the difference is only one of vigour and terseness; by leaving out what appears to be superfluous one calls

forth the impression of businesslike hurry and sometimes of sober earnestness; one has no time for artistically rounding off one's sentences and therefore chooses the shortest possible expression that will convey one's thoughts. This explains why we so often find verb-less sentences in proverbs, apophthegms, party devices and similar sayings. Here it is of some importance, too, that the shorter such a sentence is, the easier is it to remember it (cf. the Indian Sūtras), and perhaps also that the absence of a verb with its indication of time (tense) assists in suggesting an eternal or universal truth. Examples: "Like master, like man." "Every man to his taste" (Shaw, *Cashel Byron* 175). "No cure, no pay" (in Kingsley, *Hypatia* 318: No play, no pay). "Wine in, truth out" (Dickens, *Nickleby* 331) "One man, one vote." "Once taken, never shaken." "Once bit twice shy" (Phillpotts, *Mother* 251). "Once a clergyman, and always a clergyman" (Quincey, *Opium-Eater* 30). "Once a speculator, always a speculator" (Norris, *Pit* 255). "Least said, soonest mended" (e. g. Dickens, *Copperf.* 476, *Ridge, Son of State* 20). "As with the land, so with its products" (Dickinson, *Symposium* 95). "So far, good" (e. g. *Ridge, Garland* 122).

Such sentences can even stand as dependent clauses after *that*, as in "agreeing that the less said the better" (Hope, *Intrusion* 199).

Greater directness is also achieved in such cases as the following, where instead of a clause of time or condition we have a verb-less word-group loosely connected by means of *and*:

Brontë, *Professor* 181 one minute more and we should not have had one dry thread on us | Lawrence, *Publ. Mod. L. Ass.* '09. 258 A touch, and the whole may fall like a house of cards | Kingsley *Hyp.* XI A few more tumultuous years, and the Franks would find themselves lords of the Lower Rhineland | Stevenson, *Men and Books* 194 A little while ago and Villon was almost totally forgotten | Holmes *Autocr.* 233 he drew a long breath, with such a tremor in it that a little more and it would have been a sob | Stevenson, *Men and Books* 326 Once found out, however, and he seems to himself to have lost all claim to decent usage.

Thus we understand also the "rush" of the verb-less sentences quoted above (p. 152) and of Shakespeare's "Take him up gently, and to bed with him" (*Shrew Ind. I.* 72). We also feel that the absence of verbs in our modern book titles "*Troilus and Cressida*" adds to the directness as compared with the old "*Incipit de*" or "*Her begunneth of*". Note also such intermediaries between full sentences and adverbial complements as "small blame to him", for instance in Haggard, *She* 269: "He did not dare—small blame to him—to try to walk." The frequency of verb-less clauses with *whatever*, etc. (whatever the explanation: whatever the origin; whoever the original

author; however obvious the reason) may also be explained from the fact that the verb if expressed would have a time-indication and that thus the verb-less phrase is felt to be more indefinite or general, consequently better in accordance with *ever*.

On the whole we may perhaps say that the employment of a finite verb serves to round off the whole sentence and make it more classically finished, while a verb-less sentence may be compared to a Japanese drawing, in which the contours are not completely filled in: the very boldness of such a drawing assists in bringing about an artistic effect by leaving more to the imagination of the beholder. And our grammatical phenomenon thus turns out to be one little part of the ever-standing war between classicism and impressionism

— *Germanisch-Romanische Monatsschrift*, 1911.

## THE HISTORY OF A SUFFIX

According to the orthodox theory of linguists all suffixes should have taken their origin in independent words, which have gradually dwindled down to subordination. Though this is evidently true of some suffixes in historical times, such as English *-dom* and *-hood*, an enormous multitude of suffixes have never been, and probably never will be, explained in this way. It will be my task here to track the vicissitudes of one English suffix, *-en*, which serves to transform adjectives like *sharp* into verbs like *sharpen*. Such verbs when transitive are generally termed causatives, and when intransitive, inchoatives: in both cases they denote the change in condition from less to more sharp, etc.

The origin of such verbs is not quite so simple as it seems to Sweet, *New English Grammar* § 1616: "Many [?] of these [Scandinavian] verbs were imported in ME, such as *harþna*, which became *hardnen* by the influence of the ME adjective *hard*;" as a matter of fact there were not many Scand. verbs in ON *-na* adopted and they cannot explain the frequency of these formations in later English, long after the adoption of Scand. loans had ceased. Chronology speaks against this theory. Besides, Scand. *harþna* was exclusively intransitive, but ME *hardne(n)* only transitive (the intransitive use not till 1420). Kluge in *Grundriss*, and Bradley in *NED*, express themselves with more caution than Sweet.

Some very notable contributions to the clearing up of the problem were given by C. Palmgren in *De N. E. en-verben i historisk belysning in Nord. tidskr. f. filol.* 3. række, 19, p. 27 ff. (1910). The fullest treatment is found in J. Raith, *Die engl. nasalverben* (*Beitr. zur engl. philol.*, herausg. v. Max Förster, heft 17, 1931). Koziol, *Engl. wortbildungslehre* 1937, § 588, is based on Raith.

Raith conscientiously gives very full lists for OE, ME, and MnE, each chronologically arranged in three subdivisions, substantivische, adjektivische, verbale bildungen, i. e. curiously enough, verbs formed from substantives, adjectives, and verbs respectively; but he admits that these categories cannot be strictly kept apart and that some formations fall outside these classes. In each case he copies out the earliest quotation in *NED*. Raith lays too much stress on the continuity of so-called *n*-verbs from OE and even pre-English, and

therefore does not arrive at a fully consistent and satisfactory explanation of the chief thing, the numerous late ME and MnE new-formations. He has not caught hold of what to my mind is the decisive point of view, the connexion of the problem on the one hand with the general loss of final *n* and the subsequent existence of forms with and without *n*, and on the other hand with verbs formed from adjectives without *n*.

I shall now give my own theory, which was sketched in a (never published) paper read in the Danish *Videnskabernes selskab* as early as 15th Nov. 1901; I am now able to supplement what I then wrote, chiefly from those volumes of the *NED* that have been published since then.

My starting point is the general phonetic loss of final *n* (see my *Modern English Grammar*, vol. I 2. 4); this led in many cases to the existence of double forms, with and without *n*, the former used in preference when something followed (either a flexional ending or another word in close connexion), but from the first there was no semantic or other distinction. This stage is found in the treatment of OE *mægden* (a diminutive of *mægþ*) in Chaucer, who has *mayde*, but inflected *mayden(e)s* in the genitive and plural — a fact not noticed by grammarians.

Next, some *n*-forms came to be used as adjuncts before a substantive, while the *n*-less form was used isolatedly: *maid* : *maiden* aunt, *maiden* speech; the soldier was *drunk* : a *drunken* soldier. This development was promoted by the existence of old adjectives with the adjective suffix *-en*.

With *maiden* the curious thing has happened that *-en*, which originally was a diminutive substantive suffix, now is rather to be called a totally different adjective suffix.

In course of time the existence side by side of two forms without any clear distinction led to an *n* being added to forms originally without *n*. This could only happen when the phonetic structure of the word was such that *n* came to form a new syllable. Examples are:

OE *oft*, ME *ofte* : from the 14th c. *often*, note *oftentime(s)*.

OE *eald*, ME (from 1200) *old* : *olden* from the beginning of the 15th c., in Shakespeare only once, *McB* III. 4. 75 'i' th' olden time, neither in the Author. Version nor in Milton or Pope, but revived by Scott, chiefly in *olden days, times*; exceptionally in Byron *DJ* 12. 43 *olden* he was, cf. *ib.* 13. 50.

*hid* : *hidden*; the treasure is *hid* : *hidden* treasures.

OE *bedrida* : MnE *bedridden* (as if a ptc.).

Note also the American *offen* = *off* as a preposition, frequent in Jack London (W 206, V 303, 525) and Hay B (182, 191); Mencken, *Am. Lang.*<sup>4</sup> 471. does not give the correct explanation.

It is worthy of remark that this excrescent nasal is especially frequent in the same rhythm as is found in *passenger*, *nightingale*, and the other cases of intrusive *n* dealt with in my *MEG* I 2. 429, where also other literature is quoted.

Such an *n* might also be added to verbs:

*back* v from 16th c. : *backen* from 17th c., rare.

*bark* v from 14th c. : *barken* from 16th c.

*fleck* from 15th c. : *flecken* from 17th c., obs. except dial.

*flesh* v from 16th c. : *fleshen up* 'put on flesh' EDD.

*fright*, OE *fyrhtan*, now rare : *frighten* from 17th c.

*fruit* v from 14th c. : *fruiten* from 17th c., very rare.

*glass* v from 16th c., cf. *glaze* from 14th c. : *glassen*, *glazen* from 16th c.

*glist* from 13th c., now only Sc. : *glisten* from 13th c.; but there is an OE *glisnian*, *glysnian*.

ME *happe* : *happen* from 14th c.

Obs. v *haste* : *hasten* from 16th c.

*heart*, OE *hiertan* : *hearten* from 16th c.

*height* v from 16th c., † exc. Sc. : *heighten* from 16th c.

*length* v from 14th c., † : *lengthen* from 16th c.

*list*, OE *hlystan* : *listen* from 13th c. But there is an OE Northumbrian *lysna*.

*night* v from 14th c., † : *nighten* from 16th c.

*piece* v from 14th c. : *pieren* from 19th c., local.

*rid* v from 13th c. : *ridden* not in *NED*, but Wells War that will End War 78 a new Europe ridden of rankling oppression (= that has got rid of).

*root* v from 14th c. (*rooted* adj. earlier) : *rooten* nonce-word 17th c.

*shape* v from 13th c. [OE *sceppan*] : *shapen* from 16th c., rare. Sterne M 1. 31 mis-shapened.

*shift* v, OE *scifitan* : *shiften* from 16th c., obs. exc. dial.

*strength* v from 12th c., † : *strengthen* from 14th or 15th c.

*threat* v, OE *þreatian*, now arch. or dial. : *threaten* from 13th c. (rather than a continuation of OE *þreatnian* 'press, urge').

Here we may place also *wake*, *awake* : *waken*, *awaken*.

Now there existed a considerable number of verbs which in ME after the loss of the infinitival *n* differed from the corresponding adjectives by a final *-e* only. This *e* like other weak *e*'s was subse-



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quently lost, and then the verb in the present (apart from the third person), infinitive, etc., was indistinguishable in form from the adjective. Such verbs were just as liable as other verbs to be extended by means of *-en*, which here was originally just as void of signification as in *often*, etc. But with a natural process a new-formed verb like *harden* came to be connected with the adjective *hard* rather than with the previously existing verb of the same form, and then *-en* would be looked upon as a derivative suffix meaning to make, or to become, hard, etc. This feeling was, of course, strengthened when the shorter verbs went out of use, as was the case with many of them. From having no meaning at all *-en* thus came to have a definite significative value, and we witness here really a linguistic *creatio ex nihilo*. Cf. on similar instances my book *Language*, p. 184 ff. "Secretion".

We shall now go through these cases in which we have first a verb formed without *n* from an adjective and then an *-en*-form; the arrangement is according to the final sound of the adjective:

- p: *damp* v from 16th c. : *dampen* from 17th c., now chiefly U.S.  
*deep* v, OE *diepan*; in MnE very rare : *deepen* from 17th c.  
*plump* v from 16th c. : *plumpen* from 17th c., rare.  
*ripe* v, OE *ripiān*, now rare : *ripen* from 16th c.  
*shape* : *shapen*, 16th c., rare. Sterne M 1.31 *mis-shapened*.  
*sharp* v, OE *scyrpan*, *scerpan* : *sharpen* from 15th c.  
*steep* v from 17th c., rare : *steepen* from 19th c.  
[*ope* at one time seemed to belong to this class, adj. *ope* from 1250, vb *ope* from 1410, common in Elizabethan English, both now poet.; *open* adj., OE *open*, vb OE *openian*.]
- b: no examples.
- t: *blunt* v from 14th c. : *blunten* from 17th c., very rare.  
*bright* v, OE *beorhtian* † : *brighten* from 16th c. — OE Lindisfarne: *God geberhtnade hine* has probably nothing directly to do with the MnE new-creation.  
*faint* v from 14th c. : *fainten* 17th c., very rare.  
*fat* v, OE *fǣttian* (*fatted calf*) : *fatten* from 16th c.  
*flat* v from 17th c., now chiefly technical : *flatten* from 17th c.  
*great* v, OE *greahtian* † : *greaten* in the sense 'become pregnant' once 1375, otherwise from 17th c., now arch.  
*light*<sup>1</sup> v 'lessen the weight', OE *lihtan*, now comparatively rare exc. = 'alight' : *lighten* from 14th c.  
*light*<sup>2</sup> v 'shine, kindle', OE *lihtan* : *lighten* from 14th c.  
*quiet* v from 15th c., still common : *quieten* from 19th c., rare.  
*right* v OE *rihtan* : *righten* from 16th c., rare.

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- short* v, OE *sceortian* † : *shorten* from 16th c.
- slight* v from 14th c., in the now usual sense 'pay little attention to' from 16th c. : *slighten* from 17th c.
- smart* v said to be used in U.S. : *smarten* 19th c.
- stout* v from 14th c., † exc. in the phrase *stout it out*, now rare : *stouten* from 19th c.
- straight* v from 14th c. except Sc. : *straighten* from 16th c.
- strait* v from 14th c., † : *straiten* from 16th c.
- sweet* v, OE *swētan*, now rare : *sweeten* from 16th c.
- tart* v from 17th c., rare : *tarten* from 19th c., very rare.
- tight* v from 16th c., † or dial. : *tighten* from 18th c.
- wet* v, OE *wētan* : *wetten*, not in *NED*; Brynildsen: vg.
- white* v, OE *hwitian*, now rare (*whited sepulchres*) : *whiten* from 14th c. In *-stn-* and *-ftn-* *t* tends to be mute, see *MEG* I 7.734 and 5.
- chaste* v from 13th c., † : *chasten* from 16th c.
- fast* v, OE *fæstan*, † : *fasten*, OE *fæstnian* (see above). *Unfasten*, e. g. Swinburne A 100.
- just* v from 17th c., rare (cf. *adjust*) : *justen* 17th c., rare.
- moist* v from 14th c., nearly † : *moisten* from 16th c. (*bemoist* v, 16th c., † : *bemoisten* from 16th c., rare).
- soft* v from 13th c., † in the 16th c. : *soften* from 14th c.
- swift* v from 17th c. : *swiften* from 17th c., both rare.
- d: *bold* v, OE *bealdian* † (still Defoe) : *bolden* from 16th c. † (cf. *embolden*).
- broad* v from 13th c. † : *broaden* from 18th c.
- cold* v from 14th c. † : *colden* from 19th c., rare.
- dead* v, OE *deadian* e. g. Marlowe E 1472 †, but revived in U.S. college slang 'to fail, or to cause one to fail' in examination : *deaden* from 14th c., Marlowe E 598, Otway 201.
- glad* v, OE *gladian*, now poet. : *gladden* from 14th c.
- hard* v, OE *heardian*, ME *harde* † : *harden* from 13th c.
- mad* v from 14th c., now rare exc. U.S.; note 'far from the *madding* crowd' from Gray's *Elegy* : *madden* from 18th c.
- mild* v, 14th to 17th c. † : *milden* from 17th c.
- old* v, OE (*e*)*aldian* † : *olden* from 19th c., rare (Thackeray N 804).
- red* v, OE *readian* † : *redde*n from 17th c.
- sad* v from 14th c. † : *sadden* from 17th c. Cf. *sade*, OE *sadian* '(become) satiate(d)'.  
*wide* v from 14th c. † : *widen* from 17th c.
- ‡: *black* v from 13th c. : *blacken* from 14th c.
- brisk* v from 17th c. : *brisken* from 18th c. (*NED Suppl.*).
- dark* v from 14th c., †; used by Mrs. Browning and W. Scott : *darken* from 14th c.
- like* v from 15th c., rare (Shakespeare) on account of the other v. *like* : *liken* from 14th c.
- meek* v from 13th c., † : *meeken* from 14th c.
- quick* v, OE *cwician*, † : *quicken* from 14th c.
- sick* v from 12th c., † : *sicken* from 13th c.

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*slack* v from 16th c. : *slacken* from 16th c. Cf. *slake*, OE *sleacian* from the disyllabic forms of the adj. *sleac* : *slaken* from 14th c., †  
*stark* v, OE *stearcian*, arch. : *starken* from 15th c.  
*thick* v, OE *þiccian*, † or rare : *thicken* from 15th c.  
*weak* v, OE *wācan* : *weaken* from 16th c. (An earlier ex. direct from Scandinavian).

-g: no examples.

-ð: *blithe* v from 14th c., † : *blithen* from 19th c., rare.

*smooth* v from 14th c. : *smoothen* from 17th c.

-f: *deaf* v, rare (still Byron) : *deafen* from 16th c. N.B. *deave* from 14th c., still Sc.

*rough* v from 15th c. : *roughen* from 16th c.

*stiff* v from 14th c., † : *stiffen* from 17th c.

*tough* no verb : *toughen* from 16th c.

-v: *brave* v from 16th c. : *braven* nonce-word 19th c.

*live* v : *liven* rare, Galsw M 166 I saw her eyes liven again. Cf. *enliven* below.

-s, -z: *close* v [N.B. -z] from 13th c. : *closeen* from 19th c., very rare; only one quotation in *NED*: add: Galsw TL 6 a slight stoop closeened and corrected the expansion given to his face.

*fierce* v, rare, † : *fiercen* from 19th c., rare.

*gross* v, † : *grossen* 19th c., very rare.

*hoarse* v (OE once *ic hasge*), † exc. with *up* (dial. and U.S.) : *hoarsen* from 18th c.

*less* v from 13th c., † : *lessen* from 14th c.

*loose* v from 13th c. : *loosen* from 14th c., not common till 1600.

*scarce* v from 14th c., rare, † : *scarcen* from 16th c., rare.

*tense* v from 17th c., rare : *tensen* not in *NED*; Wyld Hist. Study 332 the sound...being gradually tensened to (ē).

*worse* v, OE *wyrslan* : *worsen* from 15th c., rare in literature before 19th c.

-f: *fresh* v from 14th c., nearly † : *freshen* from 17th c.

*harsh* no verb : *harshen* from 19th c.

*rich* v from 14th c. : *richen* from 14th c.; cf. *enrich*.

-3: *large* v from 14th c. : *largen* from 19th c., rare; cf. *enlarge*.

-l: *dull* v from 14th c. : *dullen* in *NED*; nonce-word 19th c., also Spencer Autobiog. I. 178.

*pale* v from 14th c. : *palen* nonce-word 19th c.

Note that *lessen* and *worsen* are the only ones from comparatives, but then these are the only English comparatives not ending in -r; and the positive forms (*little*, *evil*) are on account of the final sound incapable of having -n added to them.

There are no examples of *n*-verbs formed from adjectives ending in vowels (or diphthongs): *free*, *blue*, *low*, *slow*, *high*, *sly*, *shy*, *new*; *narrow*, *yellow*, *steady*, *holy*; nor of such disyllabics as *able*, *noble*, *idle*; nor of adjectives in *m*, *n*, *η*, *r*: *slim*, *thin*, *brown*, *clean*, *long*,

*strong; far, poor, near.* If verbs have been formed from such adjectives without any formative, they have survived without any *n*-extension, e. g. *free, slow, narrow, idle, clean.* Note the contrast in Kipling L 135 to see the smoke roll outward, thin and thicken again / Hardy L 147 her hair greyed and whitened / Quincey 295 to soften and refine the feelings.

Verbs in *-en* are formed from words ending in the same consonants after which we find participles in *-n*. There is, however, the difference that we have many participles with *-n* after vowels, diphthongs, and *r*, thus after sounds which do not admit of the formation of *n*-verbs: *seen, known, born.* The explanation is simply that here we have the retention of ME stressed monosyllables, exactly as *n* is kept in *mine, thine, one, none, own*, but in the verbs something is added in a much later period, and this something must be a second syllable.

From *high* we have, however, ME *heie*, Orrm ptc. *hezheidd* and with *n* 15th c. *hawryn* or *heynyn* (Prompt. Par.), † exc. dial. (see *NED hain*). From *dim* (v from 14th c.) we find the exceptional *dimmen* as nonce-word in the 19th c.

This accounts for the formation of *length(en)* and *strength(en)*: there are no verbs *long* or *longen* meaning 'make or become long', *strong* or *strongen*. On the analogy of these we have the rare *deepthen* (17th c.) and *breadthen* (19th c.); no corresponding verbs without *-en*.

Adjectives in *-l* generally have no verbs in *-en* (thus none from *small, full, still*); the two verbs named above are exceptional and late.

In favour of my view I may call attention to the fact that at the time when the *n*-forms were comparatively new, the simple forms were preferred in the infinitive and present, while the extended forms occurred most frequently before the endings *-ed* and *-ing* (cp. above *maid* : *maidens, broke* : *brokenly*). A. Schmidt in his Shakespeare-Lexicon noticed this with *threat*: "used only in verse and in the present time" [i. e. tense], while *threaten* is the usual verb in all forms. Similarly we find in the *Sh-Concordance* the following number of occurrence for some of the verbs concerned:

*bolds* 1 : *boldened* 2

*darks* 1 : *darkened* 2, *darkening* 1 (or 2).

*deafs* 1, *deafed* 1 : *deafened* 1, *deafening* 2.

*hap, -s* often, *happ'd* 1 : *happen* 7, *happened* 6.

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*haste* often, *hasted* 1 : *hasten* often, *hastening* 1.  
*length* 1 : *lengthen*, -s often, *lengthened* 4, *lengthening* 1.  
*list* often (-s not) : *listen* often, *listened* 2, *listening* often.  
*moist* 2 : *moistened* 2.  
*ripe* 5, *ripping* 1 : *ripen* 3, *ripens* 3, *ripen'd* 4, *ripening* 1.  
*short* 2 : *shorten* often, *shortened* 2, *shortening* 1.  
*thick* 1 : *thicken* 1, *thickens* 2.

Compare with this the fact that though *oft* and *often* are equally frequent. Sh has only the comparative *oftener* (4), no *after*, also *often-times* (7), but *ofttimes* only once.

The forms not mentioned here (e. g. *shorting*) do not occur at all. A look into the *Kyd-Concordance* shows similar relations. This of course is not more than a tendency, but it is clear that such a condition cannot be stable, and in the following centuries we see that the *n*-forms become more and more frequent in the infinitive and present, while it is only a few of the short forms that are powerful enough to survive (e. g. *black*, *fat*, *flat*, *slight*, *smoothe*); some of the short forms live on in archaic and poetic literature only (i. e. *fright hap*, *haste*). But after say 1600 we find no new formations in which -en is added to *verbs*, and the *n*-verbs (*brighten*, *shorten*, etc.) are exclusively apprehended as directly derived from the *adjectives*. Thus *broaden* does not come into existence till long after the verb *broad* had ceased to be used. There has never been a verb *coarse*, and a verb *coarsen* was formed from the adjective in the beginning of the 19th c. (but the adjective *coarse* is comparatively new, see *MEG* II 13. 71); similarly the rare *biggen*, *laten*, *louden*, *meetten*, and *ruden* from the end of the 19th c. *Cheapen* from the adj. *cheap* dates from the 16th c. and has nothing to do with OE *ceapian* in another sense.

In some of those cases in which both forms are in use a more or less pronounced differentiation has taken place. *Black* is only transitive and generally means 'put black colour upon': *black boots*; *blacken* may be used figuratively: *blacken a reputation* and may be intransitive. Cf., however, Galsw Sw 3 coal; it's blackened our faces, and now it's going to black our eyes. *Loose* = undo or set free (opposite to *bind*), *loosen* = make looser (opposite to *tighten*). *Rough* is preferred if *up*, *in*, or *out* is added, also in some special meanings, and in *rough it*, *roughen* is the ordinary verb, transitive or intransitive = make or become rough. *Slack* similarly is often used with adverbs like *up*, *off*, *out*, it also means 'be slack or idle', and it trespasses on the territory of *slake*; *slacken* is the ordinary word for 'become,

or make slack'. (This paragraph is to some extent based on Fowler, *Mod. Engl. Usage*.)

The view here advanced gives a natural explanation of the chronological relations (long after the ceasing of Scand. influence) as well as of the transitive (causative) meaning attached to these verbs, while we should have expected an intransitive (inchoative) meaning only if the verbs were due to Scand. influence, cf. ON *blána*, Dan. *blåne*, *gråne*, *stivne*, etc. The transitive Dan. verb *højne* is exceptional and quite recent. If now the English *n*-verbs are used intransitively as well as transitively, this is a phenomenon found in a great many other verbs as well, e. g. *get*, *hide*, *tire*, *withdraw*, etc.

It is curious to notice that instead of a final *en* we have sometimes a prefixed *en* (*em* before a labial) with the same effect of making an adjective into a verb. This is due originally to French verbs taken over into ME: *enfeeble* (F *enfeblir*), *enrich* (F *enrichir*), *ensure* (OF *enseurer*), and probably also *enlarge* (F *élargir*), all of them from the 14th c., *ennoble* (F *ennoblir*) from the 16th c.

On the analogy of these a certain number of verbs were made from English adjectives — and, it should be noted, from adjectives ending in sounds that do not admit of the *en*-ending: *embitter*, *embrown*, e. g. Hardy R 3, *encalm* †, *endear*, *enfree* †, *entame*, and others, all dating from the 16th or 17th c. Here we may place also *enable* (from the 15th c.), though *able* of course is originally a French word.

We may even have *en* both before and after the English word, if the adjective ends in one of the consonants that admit the English verbs in *-en*:

*embold* (15th to 16th c.) † : *embolden* from 16th c.

*embright* (16th to 18th c.) † : *embrighten* from 17th c.

*endark* (14th to 17th c.) † : *endarken* from 16th c., †.

*enlight* (14th to 18th c.; not a continuation of OE *unlihtan*) † : *enlighten* from 16th c.

*enlive* (16th to 17th c.) † : *enliven* from 17th c.

*enstrait* (15th to 16th c.) † : *enstraiten* (16th to 17th c.) †.

*enstrengthen* (15th c.) † : *enstrengthen* (16th to 17th c.) †.

These verbs with double *en* (which offer some difficulty to Raith, p. 94) are a strong argument in favour of the view that the verbs formed in *-en* were not originally formed on adjectives, but were extensions of existing verbs. — It will be seen that all the verbs in this list having *en* in the beginning only have since disappeared, and only some of those with both *en*'s have survived.



## A SUPPOSED FEMININE ENDING<sup>1</sup>

ALL historical grammars and all dictionaries say that the ending *-ster* was at first a special feminine ending, which was later applied to men as well as to women. I believe this to be entirely false, and I shall try to prove my contention that the ending from the very first was used for both sexes.

The transition of a special feminine ending to one used of men also is, so far as I can see, totally unexampled in all languages. Words denoting both sexes may in course of time be specialized so as to be used of one sex only, but not the other way. Can we imagine for instance, a word meaning originally a woman judging being adopted as an official name for a male judge? Yet, according to *N.E.D.*, *deemster* or *dempster*, ME *dēmestre*, is 'in form fem. of *demere*, *deemer*.' Family names, too, would hardly be taken from names denoting women doing certain kinds of work: yet this is assumed for family names like *Baxter*, *Brewster*, *Webster*: their use as personal names is only natural under the supposition that they mean exactly the same as *Baker*, *Brewer*, *Weaver* or *Web*, i.e., some one whose business or occupation it is to bake, brew or weave.

Some of those who take the usual theory for granted seem to have felt the difficulty of accounting for the transition from fem. to masc. Bosworth writes with regard to *bæcestre* (*baxter*): 'because afȳrde men (eunuchs) performed that work which was originally done by females, this occupation is here denoted by a feminine termination' (with reference to *Genesis*, xl, 1). But were eunuchs ever denoted by specially feminine endings? Were eunuchs regularly employed in baking in England? And how would that affect the

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<sup>1</sup> *Modern Language Review* XXII, 131 ff., April 1927.



names of other occupations? Much less absurd is the modification of this theory given by Kluge, who says that the transition from fem. to masc. has to be explained through the supposition that when female work was transferred to men, the feminine denomination, too, was transferred.<sup>1</sup> Similarly in *N.E.D.*: 'In northern ME, however, perhaps owing to the frequent adoption by men of trades like weaving, baking, tailoring, etc., the suffix came very early to be used, indiscriminately with *-er*, as an agential ending irrespective of gender, thus in the *Cursor Mundi* (a. 1300) *demestre* (see *dempster*) appears instead of *demere* (*deemer*), a judge, *bemestre* instead of *bemer*, a trumpeter.' These two examples, at any rate, do not substantiate the reasoning, for they did not denote trades formerly belonging to women. Nor does it seem very probable, even admitting that men began to take over what had formerly been women's work, that they would then submit to having the feminine name applied to them, least of all if there was by the side of it a male form, as was the case with *web*, *weaver*, *baker*, etc. I do not know whether the social part of the theory holds good, but the linguistic part, at any rate, is open to grave doubt.

Another explanation is offered by Emerson, who says that 'with the loss of grammatical gender the significance of these suffixes was also lost, so that *-ster* for instance came to be regarded as masculine.' He does not say what other endings were changed in the same way, as implied in his words 'for instance' (*History of English Language*, 1894, p. 304). The only other ending mentioned in the same section is *-ess*, but that has always been restricted to females. But his theory is wrong: the loss of the old gender system means, on the contrary, a strengthening of the linguistic expressions for sex, which were now liberated from the disturbing influence of the old chaos. Sweet says that when in ME the ending *-estre* lost the final *-e*, 'the resulting *-ster* came to be regarded as an emphatic form of *-er*, and consequently was applied to men as well as to women.' This is repeated by Franz (*Shakespeare-Grammatik*) with the addition that Romanic words like *master*, *minster*, *munister*, *pastor*, may have contributed to the aberration of the feeling for this ending ('beirrend auf das sprachgefühl

<sup>1</sup> [This explanation is repeated with regard to baking (*baccestre*) by Hoops, *Reallexikon* I 150, hence in Havens, *Handb. d. engl. Syntax* 1931, p. 197].

eingewirkt'). But such formal analogies do not seem powerful enough to bring about so far-reaching a change; besides, they cannot have existed previous to the ME period, but the change, if change there was, began in Old English. As already hinted, such an unexampled aberration never took place: the ending from the very first beginning was a two-sex ending.

There is one thing about these formations which would make them very exceptional if the ordinary explanation were true: in all languages it seems to be the rule that in feminine derivatives of this kind, the feminine ending is added to some word which in itself means a male person, thus *princess* from *prince*, *waitress* from *waiter*, not *waitess* from the verb *wait*. But in the OE words *-estre* is not added to a masculine agent noun; we find, not *bleaperestre*, but *bleapestre*, not *bæcerestre*, but *bæcestre*, thus direct from the nominal or verbal root or stem. This fact is in exact accordance with the hypothesis that the words are just ordinary agent nouns, that is, primarily two-sex words.

We now come to the actual occurrence of such words.

If we look at the facts impartially, we see that from the very first words formed with this ending were very frequently applied to males, some even exclusively so. It is true that some are found with the feminine meaning only, but these are chiefly formations created on the spur of the moment by glossarists who wanted a translation of a Latin feminine (see below). Most, if not all, of the words belonging to actual living speech were evidently two-sex words from the first, and like most two-sex words denoted occupations chiefly followed by men.

But these facts are disguised by lexicographers, preoccupied as they are with the current theory of this ending as exclusively or originally feminine. See thus Bosworth-Toller, s.v. *seamestre* f.: 'though the noun is feminine it seems not confined to females, cf. *bæcestre*.' *Ibid.*, *Suppl.*: '*byrdestre*, an; f. an embroideress.' This in spite of the fact that the only place in which the word occurs is the Erfurt Gloss. (see Sweet, *Oldest English Texts*, 109, 1153), where it translates two Latin masculines *blaciarius*, *primicularius*. *Ibid.*, *Suppl.*: '*wæscestre*, an; f. one who washes (1) used of a man: *Iobinus wæs min wæscestre* (fullo)...(2) of a woman.' The words are thus

said to be fem. even when used of men. Cf. also *N.E.D. washester*, 'a female washer (of linen), a washer-woman: In OE also applied to a man'. One curious word is also given in all our dictionaries as feminine, namely *wæpenwifestre*, which translates *hermafroditus*. (*Wæpen*, weapon, used of *membrum virile*.)

Napier, in his edition of the Digby glosses (*Anecdota Oxoniensia*, Oxford, 1900, no. 4735), thinks that the gloss *luctatorum cemp* [Napier supplies *cempēna*] *plegestra* needs some explanation and adds the following note: 'The mention of Ruffina and Secunda, which immediately follows, suggested to the gloss. that female athletes were meant'—certainly a very strange suggestion, how then are we to account for *cempēna*? It is much more natural to think that *plegestre*, which occurs only here, simply means the same thing as the Latin word, namely a wrestler or boxer, thus primarily a male; it is thus an exact synonym of the other derivatives *plegere* and *plegmann*. Bosworth-Toller innocently says '*plegestre*, an; f. a female athlete.'

In a short tale of the marvels of the East printed by Cockayne (*Narratiunculæ Anglice conscriptæ*, 1861, p. 38) we find the mention of women with long beards, of whom it is said: 'þa syndan huntigystre swiðe genemde,' thus with our ending; but the passage does not necessarily imply that *huntigystre* was used exclusively of women; it may have meant the same thing as *hunters* in a modern translation: 'these women are very able hunters.'

I have already mentioned that *bæcestre* occurs in *Genesis* applied to a man (there also the acc. pl. *bæcestran* and the gen. pl. *bæcistra*, see below). The same word is given in Ælfric's *Grammar* as a translation of the masc. *pistor*. The way in which this ending is treated in this *Grammar* is very characteristic, for on p. 190 Ælfric says: '*sarcio* ...of ðam is sartor *seamystre*, sartrix *heo*.' Here, then, the *-stre* word is given primarily as translation of the Latin masculine, and when he comes to think of the Latin fem. *sartrix*, he only adds the English fem. pronoun *heo*, showing thereby that *seamystre* is a two-sex word. But in other places where he has to translate two Latin words, one masc. and the other fem., he uses for the first the ending *-ere*, and for the second *-stre*: saltator *bleapere*, saltatrix *bleapestre*, etc. This is the usual practice of the old glossarists: when they have to render two

Latin words, of which the masc. is naturally placed first, they use the ordinary OE word (generally in *-ere*) first, and then when the fem. has to be translated they have recourse to the *-stre* word, which was applicable to both sexes, and which, moreover, reminded them of the Latin ending *-trix*. Thus we find in Wright-Wülcker's collection, p. 188, textor *webba*, textrix *webbestre*; p. 190, citharedus *hearpere*, citharistria (*sic*) *hearpestre*; p. 308, cantor *sangere*, cantrix *sangystre*, lector *rædere*, lectrix *rædistre*; p. 311, fidican *fiðelere*, fidicina *fiþelestre*, saltator *bleapere*, saltatrix *bleapestre*; p. 312, sartor *seamere*, sartrix *seamestre*. Some of the words given in this way in glossaries never occur outside these glossaries and are thus open to the suspicion that they did not really belong to the language, but were created for the nonce by the learned translator (*fylgestre*, *hoppestre*). But these words naturally impressed nineteenth-century grammarians strongly.

In a later glossary (Wright-Wülcker, pp. 685 ff.) the glossator does not treat the Latin masculines and feminines at the same place, and the result is curious. First he has a collection of masculines, where in between words like *hic emptor a byer*, *hic faber a smythe*, etc., we find some with our ending: *hic textor a webster*, *hic tinctor a lytster*, *hic victillarius a bukster*, *hic plummarius a plumstere*, *hic pistor a baxter*. But later he has a collection of *nomina artificium mulierum*, and there we find, among others, *hec pectrix a kempster*, and in the same way *webster*, *sewster*, *baxter*, *dryster*, *brawdster*, *salster*, *bukster*, thus partly the same words as those already given under the males; here he also has some words in *-er*, which thus are shown also to be two-sex words: *hec tontrix a barbor*, *hec filatrix a spynner*, *hec lotrix a lawnder*. On p. 693 there is a collection of *nomina iugulaturum (sic) mulierum*, but they have all of them *-er*, not *-ster*: *hec citharista a herper*, *hec tubicina a trumper*...*hec saltatrix a tumbler*, etc., thus with English two-sex words.

It must be admitted that some words in *-stre* are used of women in texts and not only in glossaries. I give those I have found in the form in which they occur with indication of case: *crencestræn* acc., *hoppystran* d., *lærestran* acc., *lættewestran* acc., *semestran* acc., *wæscestran* acc., *witegystre* nom., *witegestran* nom. pl.

The ending *-estre* in OE is also used to form two names of

animals, in which it is impossible to think of it as a special designation for the female: *hulfestre* 'plover' (pluvialis) and *loppestre*, mod. *lobster*. The latter is a modification of Lat. *locusta*; the change presupposes the previous existence of our suffix.

One of the reasons why people have always stuck to the feminine theory is evidently the fact that the words are weakly inflected: words with nom. in *-e* and the other cases in *-an* belong to the feminine *n*-stems (like *tunge*, *eorðe*, etc.). The corresponding masculines have *-a* in the nom. This is evidently a difficulty in the way of the two-sex view, but when we notice that all the examples of *n*-flexion are found when the words were applied to women, and that there are also some forms of the strong declensions (*-jo*-stems as in *-ere*): *bæcistra* gen. pl. masc. (not *-ena*), *plegestra*, gen. pl. masc. and *sæmestres* (gen. sg. masc.—in a charter of dubious authenticity), the possibility is not excluded that we should really distinguish two OE forms, one *-stre*, gen. *-stres* masc., and the other *-stre*, gen. *-stran* fem. However, *bæcestran* acc. pl., used of men, is an *n*-stem.

If we leave the OE period we see that Chaucer has some *-ster* words, which in modern editions are given as fem., but may just as well be taken as two-sex words: A 240 'He knew the tavernes wel in every town, And everich hostiler and *tappestere* Bet than a lazar or a *beggestere*'; C 477 'And right anon than comen *tombesteres* Fetyes and smale, and yonge *fruytesteres*, Singers with harpes. baudes, wafereres' (cf. also A 3336). Some of these refer to men rather than to women.

In *Promptorium Parvulorum*, *webstar* and *weuere* are given as indifferent equivalents of *textor*, *textrix*. And *Piers Plowman*: 'Wollene websteris and weueris of linnen,' shows that the distinction between the two words was not one of sex, but had reference to the material woven. *Wabster* to this day is common in Scotland of a man, it occurs in Burns. Some of the examples given in *N.E.D.* under (a) as fem., are really common-sex: 'Scho was the formest webster þat man findes o þat mister' can no more be adduced as a proof that the word was specially fem. than a modern sentence like 'she is a fibster' or 'a liar' proves that *fibster* and *liar* are now feminines.

So much is certain that all the words that have had vitality enough to survive into the modern period, as well as all those that have been

formed during recent times, are two-sex words, and that a great many of them are even chiefly used of males. I give all the important and a few unimportant ones: *baxter*; *boomster* (recent slang, one who works up a boom, a speculator; Wells: the factory-siren voice of the modern 'boomster,' Perrett, *Phonetic Theory*, p. 23); *drugster* (†); *dyester* or *dexter* (Sc. 'dyer,' not of women); *brewster*; *deemster*<sup>1</sup> or *dempster*; *fibster*; *gamester* (Dekker, m.); *buckster*; *knitster* (N.E.D. only one example, 1648, of a man, and yet it is said: In form, feminine); *malster*; *pitster*; *punster*; *rhymester*; *songster*; *speedster* (U.S. newspaper, 1926, not N.E.D.); *tapster*; *teamster*; *throwster*; *tipster*; *tonguester* (Tennyson, p. 438); *trickster*; *truckster* (truck farmer, U.S.); *whipster* (Swift, m.); *whitster* (Shakespeare, *Merry Wives*, III. 3. 14).

A word which is not usually mentioned in this connexion, but which should certainly be reckoned among these *-ster* words, is *barrister* (from 1547), derived from *bar*, 'the rest of the word is obscure' (N.E.D.). The only thing obscure in this word, which has never been applied to women, is the vowel *i* before the ending, which may be due to the desire to keep the consonantal quality of the *r* and to some vague association with *minister* and *solicitor* (earlier spellings are *barrester*, *barester*, *barraster*).

From adjectives we have *youngster* (chiefly of young men) and the rarer *oldster* (Thackeray, etc.); further *lewdster* (Shakespeare, *Merry Wives*, V. 3. 23 and from him in nineteenth century) and the recent American *shyster* 'lawyer who practises in an unprofessional manner.'

A recent formation is *roadster*, 'bicycle for ordinary roads, opposed to racer'—but that has nothing to do with sex.

*Songster* is found in Ælfric's *Grammar* in the way mentioned above ('*Hic cantor des sangere, haec cantrix þeos sangestre*'), but from the earliest occurrence in texts it is used of men: 1330 'He was

<sup>1</sup> [In a newspaper article by the late Alexander Bugge (*Politiken* Jan. 7. 1928) *deemster* in the Isle of Man is explained from Old Norse *dömstjórn*. I do not find this compound in Fritzner and Cleasby-Vigfusson, though they have *stjórn* 'steerer, ruler'. If this derivation is correct, the word has no more to do with the words occupying us here than has *barrester*. — I do not know where Wyld has found "OE *dēmeestre*, fem., 'she who deems, judges'", which he mentions in *The Universal Dictionary*.]

be best...Of iogelours & of sangestres'; 1497 'Henrj of Hadingtoun the sangester.' Now the word is generally kept distinct from *singer* by meaning 'writer of songs' or 'song-bird,' while *singer* is a man or woman who sings.

Like most of the words in *-ster*, *songster* is formed from a noun, while words in *-er* are now usually formed from the verb—and this really, more than the imaginary sex-distinction, forms the chief difference between the two endings.

According to the usually received theory *spinster* is the only word in *-ster* that has kept the old value of the suffix. The old meaning of the word is 'one that spins,' and in that sense it may be used of a man, thus possibly in the oldest example in *N.E.D.*: 1362 'And my wyf at Westmunstre þat wollene cloþ made, Spak to the spinsters for to spinne hit softe.' In Shakespeare, *Henry V* III, I. 2. 33, it is not yet a one-sex word: 'The clothiers...haue put off The spinsters, carders, fullers, weauers, who...are all in vprore.' Deloney also in some places uses the word of men that spin, parallel to carders. But as spinning was chiefly done by women, it came to be a designation for women (chiefly if oldish and still unmarried), exactly as *milliner*, *leman*, and *witch* came to be used of women only.

If *-ster* is a two-sex ending it is easy to understand that special feminines have been formed from such words: *buckstress*, *seamstress* (*sempstress*), *songstress*, *spinstress*, the last word meaning both 'a female spinner' and 'a maiden lady.'

So far I have considered the English occurrence of the *-ster* ending only. Nothing is known of the origin of the ending, and it does not seem to have any connexion with any feminine ending in any of the related languages.

Edw. Schröder (*Die nomina agentis auf -ster*, in *Jahrbuch des Vereins für Niederdeutsche Sprachforschung*, 1922, pp. 1 ff.) has an etymological explanation which seems to me rather fanciful: the use of the suffix began with *miltestre* 'prostitute,' which is a loan from the Lat. *meretrix* through *meletrix* and a supposed form *\*meletristia*. From *miltestre* the ending was first transferred to other connected feminine occupations ('im offizierskasino'), *bepæcestre* 'harlot,' *hearpestre*, *fipelestre*; in course of time these occupations,

which were at first reserved for low women, chiefly slaves, came to be more respected, and after some of them had come to be exercised by men, nothing could hinder the transference of the ending to words for males. The whole of this is socially and linguistically improbable. The change of *meretrix* to *miltestre* is difficult to understand except under the supposition that the suffix was already in existence when the word was transformed. If no suffix of that kind existed previously, the word *miltestre* would not be felt to be a derived word (what is *milt*?) and thus could not easily be taken as a starting-point for new formations (while this was easy enough in the case of Fr. *-esse*, where *prince* and *princesse* and other similar pairs were adopted into the language). Besides, a loan-word meaning 'prostitute' was hardly the kind of word from which a mass-production of analogical words would spring up to denote women (and men) occupied in a more decent way<sup>1</sup>.

Apart from this unfortunate etymology Schröder's article is valuable, because it gives a full account of the use of the suffix outside of England, in Dutch and in one part of the Low German district. Schröder has not the slightest doubt of the correctness of the usual theory of *-ster* as originally a specifically feminine ending,<sup>2</sup> but many of the facts conscientiously recorded by him have confirmed me in the view I had formed long before the appearance of his article and have explained above.

In the first place, continental *-ster* words are in many places used of men; in Mark Brandenburg we have thus a whole series of words: *bingster*, *bökster*, *härkster*, *mähster*, besides recent formations like *knullenbuddelster*, but the only word there exclusively used of women is *spinster*. Secondly, we find extremely often the addition after *-ster* of some specifically feminine ending exactly as in E. *seamstress*. Thus in Flemish we find by the side of words like *bidster*,

<sup>1</sup> If we have to think of one solitary Latin loan-word as the starting-point, it would be more pleasant to think of *magister* (*mæ-*), which is often found in that form (pl. *-stras*), once acc. *-stre*. But even that is hardly the source of our suffix.

<sup>2</sup> He mentions also the English words, and says: "Wie lange aber noch das bewusstsein für den weiblichen charakter der endung lebendig war, das zeigt z. b. Dan Michel von Canterbury, wenn er (ao. 1340) in seinem *Ayenbite of Inuit* s. 56 in wiedergabe eines lateinischen 'lincitrix' *þe tonge þe lickestre* schreibt, offenbar dies wort selbst im augenblick schaffend". According to *NED* the word (*lyckestre*) translates Fr. *lecheresse*.



*naeyster*, *spinster* the extended forms *bidstrige*, *naeystrige*, *spinstrige*: in the same way Middle Low German has brushed up (*aufgefrischt*) the female character of the ending by adding the female suffixes *-in(ne)* or *-(es)se*, *-sche*: *biddesterinne*, *neisterinne*, *spinsterinne*, and *bidderstersche*, *neistersche*, *spinstersche*, *bindestersche*: according to Schröder this new feminine-formation (*movierung*) was not at all necessary: it is easy to understand from my point of view. In the same way we have in Middle Dutch *bidsterige*, *diensterse*, *spinsterige*, *voestrigge* or *voesterse*, etc., with secondary additions by the side of *bidster*, *dienster*, *spinster*, *voester*. In Modern Dutch—and only there —*ster* is exclusively used of women; this Schröder considers a survival of the old rule (*trotz seiner verhältnismässig jungen überlieferung*): I am inclined in the late occurrence to see an indication of a change from the old state, a specialisation, which may seem strange, but is after all more natural than the use of a specifically feminine suffix to denote specifically masculine occupations, as in ME *deemster* and N.Fries. *greuwer*, gravedigger (the last I take from N.E.D.).

— *Linguistica*, 1933.

## EFFICIENCY IN LINGUISTIC CHANGE

### 1. Evolution and Progress.

1.1. In my youth I was, like so many of my contemporaries, under the spell of what Sapir (Language 130) somewhat unjustly termed 'the evolutionary prejudice', Darwin's and Spencer's theories. Into the latter I was first initiated through the philosophical lectures of Professor S. Heegaard during my freshman's year (1877--78). It stamped the whole of my intellectual outlook, and when I first began a serious study of philology I tried to apply this theory to the history of language, though I soon saw that Spencer's famous formulas of evolution (integration, heterogeneity, definiteness) could not be strictly and dogmatically applicable to language. I took "Progress in Language" to mean something totally different from what Spencer spoke of in the linguistic paragraphs of his essay "Progress, its Law and Cause" (Essays, vol. 1): he there speaks exclusively of a greater and greater heterogeneity--an increasing number of parts of speech, of words to express the most varied ideas, of languages and dialects produced by the splitting up of one uniform language. I took progress in the more popular sense of advance in usefulness, which Spencer here totally neglects.

Still I had some points of contact with Herbert Spencer. I had early been impressed by his essay on "the Philosophy of Style" (in Essays, vol. 2). In this he says that the best

style is that which pays most regard to the economy of the recipient's attention. "Other things equal, the force of all verbal forms and arrangements is great, in proportion as the time and mental effort they demand from the recipient is small." Again, "there is an expenditure of mental energy in the mere act of listening to verbal articulations, or in that silent repetition of those which goes on in reading—the perceptive faculties must be in active exercise to identify every syllable", etc.

But in examining the laws of style Spencer necessarily speaks of the hearer (recipient) only and says nothing about the speaker (producer). Now I found that in valuation of a language, or a linguistic expression, both sides should be taken into consideration: the best is what with a minimum of effort on the part of the speaker produces a maximum of effect in the hearer. This is the substance of my essay "Fremskridt i sproget" (1891), which formed an introduction to my thesis "Studier over engelske kasus", and was expanded in English in "Progress in Language" (1894) and still more so in "Language" (1922).

When some years after the first appearance of my theory W. Ostwald began the publication of his philosophy of energetics, I recognized in his ideas the same point of view that I had already applied to language: I found in this coincidence a strong argument in favour of my views (see "Energetik der sprache" (1914), reprinted in "Linguistica").

"Survival of the fittest"—this is the ingenious watch-word invented by Herbert Spencer to explain what Darwin understood by "natural selection": those individuals of a species are preserved that are best adapted for their environments. Can this be applied to language? Evidently not to

language as wholes: which of these are preserved and which are doomed to extinction is determined by other considerations than the intrinsic perfection of their structure or the reverse: here wars and political conditions are generally decisive. But *within* a language we must admit the truth of the slogan: those particular traits of a language which are best adapted to their purpose tend to be preserved at the cost of others which do not answer the linguistic purpose so well. This will be demonstrated in many particulars of the following disquisition.

1.2. When I began writing on language, the prevalent theory was this: language had begun with inflexible roots, some of these in course of time became subordinate grammatical implements which were first agglutinated to and eventually fused with the more substantial elements. In this way was achieved the development of inflexional languages such as primitive Aryan (Indo-European, exemplified in Sanskrit, Greek and Latin); here the high-water mark was attained, and since then we witness only decay, degeneracy, and destruction of the beautiful structures of these old languages. To this I objected, trying to show that viewed from the point of view of human energetics so far from being retrogressive the tendency in historical times has on the whole been a progressive one.

Though it is possible that in my endeavour to refute old theories I paid too little attention to those changes that are not beneficial, I never maintained that all linguistic changes in all languages and at all times made for progress; I never was an "optimist à la Pangloss", but I still think that I was right in saying that on the whole the average development was progressive and that mankind has benefited by

this evolution. (See the detailed exposition in *Lang.*, p. 319—366.)

In the summary found *ib.* p. 364, I said that the superiority of the modern Aryan languages as compared with the older stages manifests itself in the following points:

(1) The forms are generally shorter, thus involving less muscular exertion and requiring less time for their enunciation.

(2) There are not so many of them to burden the memory.

(3) Their formation is much more regular.

(4) Their syntactic use also presents fewer irregularities.

(5) Their more analytic and abstract character facilitates expression by rendering possible a great many combinations and constructions which were formerly impossible and unidiomatic.

(6) The clumsy repetitions known under the name of concord have become superfluous.

(7) A clear and unambiguous understanding is secured through a regular word-order.

Each of these points had in the preceding pages been fully documented by *typical* examples; no. (2), for instance, through reference to the chapter in "Progress" in which the case system of OE and ModE had been tabulated in the same way, filling seven and two pages respectively. With regard to (3) I pointed out the very important consideration that when we look at the actual facts we see that anomaly and flexion go invariably together (*Lang.* 232): it is thus wrong to say that "the Aryan inflexions were once more numerous and at the same time more distinct and regular," as Sweet says (*Collected Papers* 68).

These chapters in my book have never been refuted, either as a whole or in detail. Most subsequent writers on language simply disregard the question of progress or retrogression, or even mention it as lying outside the sphere of scientific linguistics.

In reading many books on the history of language one gets the impression that the history of languages is nothing but a purposeless fluttering hither and thither. I tried, and shall again in this treatise try to show that a great many changes manifest a purpose, conscious or unconscious, to better existing conditions, and that some changes, though apparently detrimental, may, if summed up, in the long run prove beneficial and make for progress. People have sometimes blundered into improving their mother-tongue.

1.3. The only two writers, as far as I know, who after me have dealt at some length with the question of progress in language are Charles Bally and J. Vendryes. The former discusses it in *Le Langage et la Vie*, 1st ed. 1913 (thus nineteen years after *Progress*), 2nd ed. 1926 (thus three years after *Language*). He has no difficulty in showing that language has not attained, and on account of the multiplicity of practical life probably never will attain, the complete logical ideal of *univocité*—the same idea always expressed by the same form, and the same form always meaning the same thing—and he goes on to examine the relation between synthesis and analysis with examples of their mutually replacing each other so that advance is a pure illusion: it is six of one and half a dozen of the other; the whole linguistic development is made up of rhythmic ups and downs. He mentions neither my previous work nor my criticism of his 1st edition. His treatment is unsatisfactory

because he does not compare the structure of earlier and later stages of the same language *as wholes*, as I had done in the chapter mentioned above (1.2), and because he does not see the importance of the point of view of energetics, the relation between the output of energy and the result attained.

J. Vendryes in the last chapter of *Le Langage* (1921) deals with "le progrès du langage". But though he warns against "une confusion fâcheuse entre la langue littéraire et la langue tout court" he does not seem himself to have avoided this confusion. His main result is that on the whole gains and losses counterbalance one another very nearly: everything depends on the hand that shakes the instrument. He no more than Bally has seen the importance of energetics, nor does he compare two stages of one and the same language *as wholes*. Most of his chapter does not concern us in this connexion.

1.4. In a very short chapter of his admirable book *The Making of English* Henry Bradley speaks of "Profit and Loss". He turns against some extreme optimists who think that in the evolution of language "everything happens for the best, and that English in particular has lost nothing, at least so far as its grammar is concerned, that would have been worth keeping". But who are these optimists? As already remarked, I myself never said that *everything* happened for the best. Bradley says that in writing English special care and ingenuity are often required to avoid falling into ambiguities—but is not that true of other languages as well? In colloquial English there are some abbreviations which sometimes occasion inconvenience by their doubtful meaning: thus *he's* may be either 'he is'

or 'he has', and *I'd* may be either 'I had' or 'I would'—but certainly in nearly every case the form of the following verb will resolve any doubt. Still, Bradley says that English has gained by many additions to its grammatical resources and by the disappearance of superfluous inflexions as well as by the reduction of those which remain to mere consonantal suffixes; this has greatly increased the capacity for vigorous condensation. English thus has the peculiar advantage of a noiseless grammatical machinery, and further the ability of stressing the auxiliary as in 'I *did* live there' and of using the auxiliary by itself as in 'Yes, I do,' 'it certainly will not.' I think that in spite of his cautious expressions his few pages on the subject justify me in enlisting the eminent late scholar among those who on essential points agree with my views on progress in English.

G. Cederschiöld's paper *Framsteg i språket* (1897) reprinted in *Om kvinnospråk och andra ämnen* (1900), fully agrees with my points of view. So does E. H. Sturtevant in *Linguistic Change* (1917), p. 176.

1.5. In this treatise I shall not repeat the substance of what I said in *Progress and Language*, but merely in detail examine some points in which the progressive tendency manifests itself in various ways. In thus taking up some related strands and trying to weave them into a new pattern I am afraid that readers of my other books will here and there recognize ideas and examples they have seen elsewhere, but as they are given here in a new setting and for a different purpose I hope I may be forgiven for such unavoidable repetitions.



## 2. Language. Change.

2.1. Language is activity, chiefly social activity undertaken in order to get into touch with other individuals and communicate to them one's thoughts, feelings and will. On other social purposes see below, ch. 10. Sometimes language may be used simply to give vent to one's feelings, or even to make one's ideas clear to oneself, thus especially in silent soliloquy. But, as remarked, the main purpose of language is communication with other people.

2.2. A speaking individual is at any moment in his *speech* obliged to make a choice from among a variety of expressions that his own *language*, i. e. the collective habits of the community to which he belongs, places at his disposal and which he retains in his memory. He is, of course, seldom clearly conscious of this selective process, but it is nevertheless a fact. He has to decide for the moment if he is to use the most familiar, natural, everyday expression, or if he is to use a more literary, solemn, stilted, or even poetical style. He chooses out of a set of synonyms that which seems to him the most adequate: *big*, *large*, *extensive*, *enormous*, etc., or *loves*, *likes*, *is fond of*, *prefers*, etc. What details is he to include, and what is he to leave to the imagination of his audience? Is he to make a direct assertion or to use a rhetorical or ironic question? Will it be best to speak very loud, using a very distinct and pointed, emphatic pronunciation, or will a careless, inattentive, or even slovenly pronunciation do for the moment? Is a severe, rough, or a mild, insinuating tone to be employed? The same, or nearly the same, idea can thus be brought to the consciousness of one's hearer in a variety of ways: language is a multifarious world.

What is here said of speaking naturally applies *mutatis mutandis* to written exposition as well, where a man has to make his choice between different styles, from the most elaborate to the most 'telegraphic' way of expressing himself; within each he has the same choice of words and constructions as in talking.

2.3. *Speech* is here taken in the strict, most concrete sense of a momentary act of one individual. Ferdinand de Saussure was the first to distinguish sharply between *parole* and *langue*. I criticized part of his view in Mank. p. 11 ff., chiefly because he established a gulf between the two and said that the individual was absolute master of his speech, but was powerless with regard to his language. The distinction has since then been elaborately treated by Alan H. Gardiner, see *The Theory of Speech and Language* (1932) and his paper at the Rome Congress (*Atti del III Congresso Intern. dei Linguisti*, p. 345 ff.), see also his reply to criticisms in ESTs 19.58 ff.

The following remarks form the substance of what I said in the discussion in Rome.

We have a whole gradation, from the most concrete to the most abstract notion, cf. in another domain: one particular cruel act of one individual tiger—the cruel habits of the same tiger — cruelty as a characteristic trait of tigers as a species. In language we have:

(1) Speech.

(2) The whole of one individual's language, his vocabulary, intonation, etc.

(3) The manner of expression common to him and his set.

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(4) The dialect of his parish, town, or county.

(5) His mother-tongue as comprising all the various local dialects of one country or one nation. In the case of English we may even distinguish (5a) the language of Great Britain, (5b) that of the British Empire, (5c) that of the United States, the three making up together a still higher abstraction, "English" as a whole.

(6) The power of using language common to all mankind, what Saussure called *le langage* as distinct from *la langue*.

It is a simple consequence of our definition that an isolated word, as we find it in a dictionary, belongs to language only; it is an abstraction; in speech it is found only in connexion with other words. This is really also the case when one word makes up a whole sentence, because other elements are understood from the context or it may be from the whole situation, as in answers: "Who said that? — Mother" | "When did she say it? — Yesterday," --- and in retorts: "If I were rich enough . . . Yes, if!" | "Splendid!"

As developed in PhilGr. 64 ff., it is characteristic of proper names such as *John* that while in language, in a dictionary for instance, they are completely void of meaning, they are pregnant of the most comprehensive meaning when actually employed in speech, where they call up each time a whole complex of associations.

2.4. That language changes is a fact which no one can be blind to who reads a page of Beowulf, of Chaucer, of Shakespeare, and compares it with the speech of his next-door neighbour. But why is it constantly changing? If we are not content with the general answer that everything

human changes, and that London and the ways of its inhabitants are now necessarily different from what they were centuries ago, we must look for special causes in the very nature of a language. These are partly already hinted at in the definition just given, and lie partly in the fact that language is not inherited like the process of digestion, etc., but must be learnt afresh by each individual through imitation—a child's imitation of his parents and play-fellows and a grown-up's imitation of his contemporaries. The imitation is never perfect in every respect, and new situations and wants constantly force a speaker to say something which he has never heard or said before in exactly the same way.

It is evident that in order to be introduced into any language an innovation must first occur in speech: it may be used by one individual and be accepted by his fellows, or it may, as is often the case, spring up independently in the speech of several individuals belonging to the same nation.

2.5. In linguistic changes we see the constant interplay of two opposite tendencies, one of an individual, and the other of a social character, one towards ease and the other towards distinctness.

The former is the tendency to take things easy and to follow the line of least resistance—to say it bluntly, an outcome of human indolence or laziness. The desire to save time and trouble leads to slack and slovenly articulation, which in extreme cases descends to mere murmuring, and in another field to a slipshod style, throwing out vague hints and indefinite suggestions, thus implying rather than expressing.

The opposite tendency is an effort to be clearly and precisely understood, and to make as vivid and convincing an impression on the hearer as possible; each articulation is therefore made slowly and distinctly, and great exertion is made to choose the most lucid and forcible expression ('le mot propre'). In extreme cases this may lead to pomposness and over-emphasis.

If the former tendency is dissolving or subversive, the latter is on the whole conservative and tends to keep alive the traditional norm. But it is not strictly correct when it is sometimes said (e. g. by Gabelentz) that any innovation is an infringement of the norm or laws of the language in question: when an English speaker for the first time forms a plural in *-s* of a brand-new word, he introduces something absolutely new, but does so in strict conformity with the laws of the English language.

On the whole question of causes of changes see the detailed exposition in Lang. chs. XIV and XV. Cp. also what is said below (ch. 11) on fashion.

2.6. The first of these tendencies naturally leads to greater ease. But the question of phonetic ease is more complicated than it would seem at the first blush. Sapir and others say that the feeling of ease is subjective: what to us seems a very easy articulation is very difficult indeed to an Indian and vice versa. With regard to isolated articulations they are perfectly right, cf. also what Verner and myself say about difficulties of articulation in Lang. 262 f. Greater muscular exertion is not decisive: it requires less effort to chip wood than to operate for cataract. Is a stop like [t, d, k, g] easier or more difficult than the corresponding fricatives [ð, γ]? That may be contested in

*abstracto*. Children learning their language evidently find the stops easier. But when the stops pass into the fricatives as in Dan. *bade*, *bage*, we have a case of assimilation, and in this intervocalic position the new open consonant is no doubt easier than the stop. All assimilations make for greater ease *in that position*: [m, l, r] are not in themselves easier than [n], yet Lat. *impono*, *illegalis*, *irrationalis* are easier than the supposed original forms with *in* + *p, l, r*. So is *handkerchief* with [hæŋk] than with [hændk]. All droppings of consonants also make for phonetic ease (many of these may be viewed as assimilations), thus [g] after [ŋ] in *king*, *song*, etc., *w* and *k* in *wrong*, *knight*, etc. Here there is nothing subjective in the feeling of greater ease. Thus also, I think, when *ia*, *ua* in two syllables in rapid pronunciation become one syllable [ja, ja, ua, wa].

Apart from purely phonetic change it must be recognized that greater ease to everybody concerned is obtained by many morphological changes, as when the inflexional system is simplified and made more regular, think e. g. of the uniform development of the definite article *the*, the spreading of *-s* as mark of the plural, the whole simplification of the case-system in substantives and adjectives, etc.

2.7. The opposite tendency is seen in speech when one feels that one has not been understood. The other person may ask "What?" or "I beg your pardon" and one therefore has to repeat one's words more distinctly: "I said 'imminent', not 'eminent'" with a clearly marked vowel, or "'increase, not 'decrease" with the stress shifted on to the distinctive syllable. Or one may choose to repeat the same idea in different words altogether.

Even apart from such more or less altered repetitions

the desire to be distinctly understood may show itself in unusually protracted long vowels and consonants. Many double consonants in various languages evidently owe their appearance to the desire for emphasis. Under the influence of strong emotion Eng. [ju'] may be made into [i'u'] (Lang. 277); in novels written e. g. *bee-yutiful*; cf. also the emphatic pronunciations represented in *tree-mendous*, *ber-luddy*. When *splendid* is not felt to be strong enough, it is colloquially expanded into *splendidious* or *splendiferous*. Now and then long "mouth-filling" epithets may be desirable. Sometimes also a speaker or writer may be afraid that his audience will not understand something unless they get it hammered into their heads: for fear of a too concise style he may therefore fall into the opposite extreme, prolixity.

2.8. In course of time a pronunciation called forth by the desire to be clearly understood may become a fixed feature of the language in question. Thus the fuller forms *ever*, *never*, *over*, *on*, have been practically everywhere substituted for the formerly very frequent forms without *v* or *n*: *e're*, *ne're*, *o're*, *a*, which were liable to misunderstandings (MEG I 2.533). With regard to stress see MEG I ch. V on value-stress and contrast-stress, especially 5.55. Thus the distinction between pairs like *lessor* [le'sɔ'ə] and *lessee* [le'si'] has become firmly established, and a stressed *re* has become a much-used prefix in such formations as *re-cover* as distinct from the older *recover*. English superlatives also offer an example of the influence of a care for distinctiveness. In Elizabethan times they were often formed in *-st* with dropping of the unstressed vowel in accordance with the ordinary sound-laws: *kind'st*, *stern'st*, *sweet'st*,

*strict'st*. But from the 17th century a reaction set in and the modern forms with a distinct vowel *-est* have prevailed, even after a vowel: *truest*, etc.

As a rule short words are preferred to longer ones, but at times they may be indistinct, and longer words may be substituted. We see this in the Romanic languages, which have discarded such Latin words as *vis*, *spes*, *res* in favour of *fortia* (Fr. *force*, It. *forza*); Fr. *espoir*, It. *speranza*; *cosa*, Fr. *chose*. (The acc. *rem* survives only in Fr. *rien* in a negative sense). *Dies* became *di*, which was too short except in compounds like Fr. *midi* and the names of the days of the week; in Sp. and Port. it was expanded into *dia*, in Fr. and It. the fuller *diurnum* took its place: *jour*, *giorno*. Instead of *avis* a diminutive was used: Fr. *oiseau*, It. *uccello*, or the meaning of *passer* 'sparrow' was generalized: Sp. *pajaro*, Port. *passaro*.

2.9. The two tendencies often lead syntactically to two parallel expressions for the same idea, according as economy of speech or redundancy (over-distinctiveness) prevails. Thus with regard to the person of the verb: Lat. *canto* expresses it once, *ego canto* twice, which generally takes place only for the sake of emphasis or contrast. In the same way still in Italian. In French, on the other hand, it is necessary to add the pronoun because the verb form of *je chante*, *tu chantes*, *il chante* is phonetically identical; *chantons* indicates the first person plural unmistakably, but as this form has been utilized for the imperative, it is therefore necessary in the indicative to add the pronoun: *nous chantons*. In Gothic conditions are essentially as in Latin, but in the modern Gothonic languages a pronoun is always required, even where the verbal form shows the person,



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as in *G. du singst*, *E. he sings*, in which the person is doubly indicated.

Or take sequence in time. This may be implied, i. e. not expressly stated: 'veni vidi vici | when he came back from America he settled in Bristol' (= on his return; but no sequence is implied in 'when he came back from America he was a poor man' = at his return) | 'when he heard this he left the room | he stood silent for a long time. Now he suddenly exclaimed' . . .

Note the four expressions:

- (a) Hearing this he left the room
- (b) After hearing this he left the room
- (c) Having heard this he left the room
- (d) After having heard this he left the room.

In (a) the sequence is implied, in (b) and (c) expressed once, in (d) twice.

To (b) and (c) correspond the expressions in clauses: 'postquam hoc audivit | after he heard this (as soon as he heard this, the moment he heard this), he left the room': the sequence expressed once.

Thus also in two main sentences: He had stood silent for a long time. Then he suddenly exclaimed . . .

To (d) corresponds: 'after he had heard this (as soon as he had heard this, the moment he had heard this), he left the room' This has now become the usual expression when a conjunction is used.

While the use of the pluperfect is here natural enough to express the before-past time, the conjunction *before* would seem naturally to require the simple preterit: he died (had died) before I *fired* the shot,—but the pluperfect may also be used, I suppose originally from the analogy

of the *after*-construction: 'he turned round before he had seen me' While both *after* and the pluperfect draw in the same direction: to the left in the line

—————→ now,

*before* draws to the right and the pluperfect to the left.

A young student calls my attention to a distinction here: 'He went to his seat before I spoke to him' implies that I did speak to him, while 'He went to his seat before I had spoken to him' leaves the possibility open that I did not speak to him. 'He came before the meeting began' (just in time to join me for a drink before the opening speech) — but 'He came before the meeting had begun' opens the possibility of the continuation 'just in time to have it cancelled'. I suspect that this is somehow due to the imaginative use of *had* = 'would have'. Note also "He always leaves the room before the clock strikes / has struck".

With regard to the "before-future" time we have the usual shorter expressions *we shall go out when the rain stops* or *when the rain has stopped*, and the pedantic, in which futurity is expressly stated: *when the rain shall have stopped*.

On the various tense-relations and economy in their expression see many quotations in MEG IV 2.3(3), 5.6(1), 5.6(3), 6.1, 7.8, 22.2(1), 22.2(7).

2.10. If language is defined (2.1) as purposeful activity, it follows that the question must naturally be raised if a given language or a given linguistic fact answers its purpose, and if an observed change in a language can be called beneficial or not. This is the main theme of this little book. Further the question may be raised: Are such changes as may be termed beneficial brought about deliberately, or can they be thus produced?

It is evident that the immediate purpose in speaking is in nearly all cases merely to communicate with the hearer or hearers of the moment, and this is done without any conscious thought on how that purpose is carried out. But in rare instances a speaker, or more often a writer, may think about the value of some word or expression found in his ordinary language, and then he may try to improve it and thus to influence language. This is what is termed "art" in my paper *Nature and Art in Language* (Lingst. p. 434 ff.). I shall revert to some instances of this in the following pages.

But it cannot be denied that such deliberate intention to influence one's mother-tongue is an exception: most changes are produced inadvertently, and yet they may aid to bring about something that may be called beneficial, i. e. progressive in the sense here indicated. Even a long cumulation through centuries of small changes, each of which is a deviation from the norm (a slip or blunder), may constitute a considerable gain to the language in question, e. g. indistinct pronunciations or droppings of final syllables which have led to the simple "noiseless" English flexional system.

Long after I had thought this out I was happy to find similar ideas in the late German linguistic philosopher A. Marty. O. Funke in his book *Innere Sprachform* (Reichenberg i. B. 1924) quotes from Marty some sentences which I try to translate: "Not only the first creator of a [linguistic] sign made gropingly a selection, but his fellows did the same, one more and another less, and only what pleased the whole community (kreis) and was definitely accepted by them became a relatively permanent part of their common language and a fixed habit. But this selection

of serviceable means of communication was completely planless. Everyone who contributed a fragment to the formation of a language was thinking only of the needs of the moment, and no one had any consciousness of the whole or of the final result or the functions of each component, still less of the method followed in the construction. In this sense the formation of a language was unconscious and unintentional."

### 3. Sound-laws.

3.1. When I began writing on linguistic questions the prevalent occupation of the leaders of the science was with sound-changes, which were reputed to obey '*blind*' *fatalistic sound-laws* (phonetic laws): these were supposed to be purely destructive, breaking asunder the systematic structure of a language so that the irregularities caused by them had to be remedied by analogical formations. These two, sound-law and analogy, were thought between them to explain nearly everything in the development of languages.

That this description of the prevalent view is not exaggerated may be seen e. g. by a few quotations from a book printed as late as 1926: "Une langue est sans cesse rongée et menacée de ruine par l'action des lois phonétiques, qui, livrées à elles-mêmes, opéreraient avec une régularité fatale et désagrégeraient le système grammatical. . . Heureusement l'analogie (c'est ainsi qu'on désigne la tendance inconsciente à conserver ou recréer ce que les lois phonétiques menacent ou détruisent) a peu à peu effacé ces différences", etc (Bally, LV<sup>2</sup>, p. 40-41). But Bally here does nothing but repeat his master F. de Saussure's words: "Le phénomène phonétique est un facteur de trouble. . . il contribue à relâcher les liens grammaticaux. . . Heureusement l'effet de ces transformations est contrebalancé par l'analogie", etc. (*Cours de*

*Ling. gén.* 1916, p. 227, 2. éd. 1922, p. 221). The same idea pervaded much of what was written in the 1880'es.

It cannot be said that this description of sound-changes ('sound-laws') as always destructive and splitting up forms that belong together, so that analogy has to step in to repair the damage, is a correct one, for besides such divergent changes we have convergent ones. Thus when in Scandinavian languages initial *p* became *t* (e. g. *ting*) and *z* became *r* (e. g. *dagr*), or when in English initial *kn*, *gn*, *wr* lost their first consonants (e. g. *know*, *gnaw*, *wrong*). If any damage is caused by such changes, it is the rise of homophones (e. g. *know* = *no*, *write* = *rite*; cf. below 4.3 and 5) — but there analogy is of no use as a remedy.

3.2. Against the theory of the blind 'sound-laws' without exceptions I raised several objections in my very first linguistic paper (*Zur lautgesetzfrage* 1886, reprinted in *Linguistica* 1933). I called attention to the lessons to be drawn from children's speech, which had been neglected by the linguists of that date; but the most important contention I made was the emphasis I laid on the *value point of view*: what the speaker particularly wants that his audience should lay at heart, he will pronounce with special care and with strong stress on the most important parts of his utterance. An actor and a political speaker, who cannot expect to be interrupted by a "What did you say?", must articulate more distinctly than he who speaks to the circle of his familiars. Anyone will tend to slur over what to him, and presumably to his hearer, is of no real importance. I explained in this way the violent abbreviations found in insignificant greetings like (*good*) *morning*, German [na'mt] for *guten abend*, in French [splɛ] for *s'il vous plaît*,

and in titles like Spanish *Usted* from *vuestra merced*; Russian *gosudar* 'master', 'sir' even sinks down to a mere [s], which in polite speech may be attached to nearly any word. Such irregular changes cannot, I said, be understood merely from the very frequent use of these words, but from the ease of understanding and from their worthlessness to speaker and hearer alike. We now also understand the existence of many double forms of the same word, one in more solemn and the other in more familiar language. Further we see that a normally weakly stressed syllable may acquire strong stress when for the sake of contrast it becomes the most important part of the word: German *sowohl* <sup>1</sup>*real als* <sup>1</sup>*formal*, etc. Nay, when we have double forms like French *me* and *moi* on account of different sentence stress, such stress in its turn depends on the different value attached to the word in different positions.

3.3. The same fundamental idea was many years later taken up and illustrated by a great many examples from various languages in W. Horn's book *Sprachkörper und sprachfunktion* (1921, 2nd ed. 1923). The title is not very well chosen, for what is function? What he really means is 'bedeutung und wortumfang'. He mentions incidentally my old paper; to my much fuller treatment in *Language* (1922) he later did full justice in a review in *Beiblatt zur Anglia* 1925. Horn's book was somewhat severely criticized by K. Luick (EStn 56 p. 185—205 and again ib. 58 p. 236 ff.), who rejects, partly perhaps with justice, some of Horn's explanations and is on the whole averse to ascribing a *direct* shortening of the 'sprachkörper' to its worthlessness. But Luick does not see that when in his own explanations he speaks of the effacing of the original meaning, e. g. in

composite place-names, and of the loss of stress, he *indirectly* asserts what he is out to deny, the influence of meaning on the phonetic development.

[On Horn's book see also Carl Karstien in *Festschrift für Streitherg* (1924), p. 399 ff.; O. Funke in *Festgabe Karl Luick* (1925), p. 102 ff.; E. Fraenkel *IF* 41 (1923), p. 393 ff. (on Baltic languages).]

Ed. Hermann's *Lautgesetz und analogie* (Göttingen 1931) also shows to what extent linguistic science has for 50 years been obsessed by the dualism indicated in its title. Hermann is much less anxious to tell us how he himself thinks that phonetic changes originate and work, than to show that none of the explanations hitherto proffered, whether correct or no, is capable of proving that sound-laws are without exceptions. But curiously enough among these theories he does not mention that of sound-changes being due to the tendency to make articulation easier. He does not explain how the great regularity we actually find in many cases has been brought about. Nor does his treatment of analogy give a fully satisfactory theory; but his book contains many interesting details.

3.4. A particularly important application of the principle of value, which had not been generally noticed, is found in the so-called end-laws (*auslautsgesetze*). Such special laws are dealt with in most books on sound-history. Comprehensive books on the subject are A. Walde, *Die germanischen auslautsgesetze* (1900) and R. Gauthiot, *La fin de mot en indo-européen* (1913). What is the ultimate reason for a special phonetic treatment of the end of words, different from that of the same sounds in the beginning or middle of words? In one of the chapters of my *Phonetische grundfragen* (1904, the chapter is reprinted in *Lingst.*

p. 193 ff.) I answered: what is essential to the understanding of a word is often already reached before one arrives at its end, which therefore is of comparatively little value; hence vowels are shortened and (or) made indistinct, often reduced to [ə] or finally dropped, and final consonants may likewise disappear altogether.

Such slurrings of the endings of words are never purposely done in order to make a language better, but in the long run the summed-up result may benefit a language by making it shorter and its flexions simpler.

3.5. With such ordinary end-laws I now want to connect a series of phenomena which are not generally included in sound-history, viz. such violent abbreviations of words in which in familiar speech the beginning is sufficient to call forth the idea in the mind of the hearer: a great part of the word is therefore dropped as superfluous. We find such 'stump-words' in shortenings of Christian names like *Di* for *Diana*, *Em* for *Emily*, *Fred* for *Frederick*, *Vic* for *Victoria*, etc., and of family names like *Mac* for *Macdonnell*, *MacDougal*, etc., *Dizz* (*Dizzy*) for *Disraeli*, *Beau* for *Beaucherc*, *Pen* for *Pendennis*, *Pop* for *Popjoy*, *Lab* for *Labouchère*, *Pam* for *Palmerston*, *Dan. Jesper* for *Jespersen*, *Lau* for *Laurits*, *Ras* for *Rasmus* or *Rasmussen*.

Outside proper names we have such well-known stump-words as *cab*(riolet), *fad*(aise), *brig*(antine), *sop*(ereign), *undergrad*(uate), *zep*(elin), *pram* for *perambulator*, *navvy* for *navigator*, in other languages *kilo*(gram), *auto*(mobile), Fr. *aristo*(crate), *réac*(tionnaire), *vélo*(cipède), *métro*, *ciné*(ma, -matographe), German *ober*(kellner), etc., (Lang. p. 170).

An interesting international example where more and more elements have been left out of a name that was felt



to be too long and clumsy for a familiar object, is the name of the new instrument that in the beginning of the eighteenth century came up as a modification of the earlier *cembalo* and was first named *clavicembalo col piano e forte*: this was shortened into *fortepiano* or *pianoforte* ab. 1767; but the latter was reduced into *piano*; the earliest example of this in the NED is from 1803.

3.6. From my own language I may mention a few examples which present more than usual interest. An earwig is called *ørentvist*, the origin of which is no longer understood: it is from *oren-tve-stjert*, literally 'ear-two-tail' (dialectal Dan., Norw., Sw. have *tvestjert*), this was shortened because it was too long and contained three members (a two-member compound like *vipstjert* 'wagtail' is not shortened).

Danish has some clumsy numerals based on the vigesimal system, *tresindstye* 60 'three times (ODan. *sind*) twenty', *firsindstye* 80 'four times twenty', and with *halv* 'half' followed by the ordinal *halvtredsindstye* 50, literally 'half-third times twenty',- *halvfjerdsindstye* 70, *halvfemsindstye* 90. These have been shortened into *halvtreds* 50, *tres* 60, *halvfjerds* 70, *firs* 80, *halvfems* 90, and similarly we say *fyrre* 40 for *fyrretype* (in which *type* stands for 10, *tigjus*, see below 6.3). But it is interesting to note that these stump-words were at first used only when strictly final (in *pausa*), as in *han er halvfjerds*, while the full forms had to be used if another word followed: *halvfjerdsindstye år*, *firsindstye rigsdaler*. This was the strict rule until 1875, when the old monetary system (*rigsdaler* = 6 *mark* à 16 *skilling*) was superseded by the new *krone* divided into 100 *øre*; then people began to find it inconvenient to say always *halvtredsindstye øre*, and used *halvtreds øre* instead,

and the custom spread to e. g. *halvfjerds år*, etc., which is still disliked by some people. The ordinals, in which *-tve* is followed by *-ende*, still retain the full forms *firsindstyvende*, etc.

In recent years many Danes have proposed to give up the traditional names for the tens and to use instead *toti*, *treti*, *firti*, *femti*, *sexti*, *syvti*, *ottti*, *niti*. This would certainly not only simplify the system, but also bring us nearer to our Norwegian and Swedish brethren. In cheques and postal orders these new numerals are often used alongside of the old ones. When the proposal was first made, Georg Brandes opposed it vigorously: the old ones were more picturesque and aesthetically preferable, he said. From our point of view of human energetics much may be said in favour of the old system, but (it should be observed) only with regard to the shortened forms, which are convenient in use and at once understandable without any mistake, though it is true that they are more difficult to learn. We shall see below in other numerals that a synthetic form may have advantages over an analytic one (6.3): cannot the same be said of *tres* in comparison with *sexti*, etc.?

3.7. While most of the shortenings here mentioned have been made more or less unintentionally, we have fully intentional creations in others, e. g. the official German terms for two of the horrors of our 'civilized' times, as *Gestapo* = geheime staats-polizei, *Stuka* = sturzkampfflieger. Cf. also *Linguistica* p. 441: *Dora* and others from initial letters. College terms like *lab*(oratory), *math*(ematics) probably first began in writing.

3.8. It will easily be seen that such shortenings on the basis of the value theory are closely connected with the theory of *ellipses* generally, through which one leaves out what is (or is thought to be) unnecessary for the understanding of the whole. We meet with ellipses in many fields: a *copper* (coin or boiler) | a *buttonhole* (flower) | *St. Paul's* (Cathedral) | we dined at *Dr. Brown's* (house) | Will you go? I *want to* (go), but I *can't* (go) | I had two cups, but Mary (had) *three* (cups). | she is *fourteen* (years old), etc. etc. The subject is too enormous for me to take it up here.

It is evident that ellipses do not always strike out elements that would have been placed at the end of an utterance; many have been brought about by "prosiopesis", leaving out the beginning of an utterance, e. g. (I) *thank you* | (I am) *sorry* | (Do you) *see?*, etc.. cf. e. g. MEG III ch. 11.

On ellipsis in general see also Brugmann, *Vgl. Gramm.*<sup>2</sup> II.1 p. 40 ff. But it is curious that Brugmann here quotes my paper on "subtraktionsdannelser", though it deals with something totally different, now termed "back-formations". Ellipsis is a linguistic reality, but some syntacticians misuse it to explain things which have nothing to do with it (ellipsomania).

#### 4. Linguistic Imperfections.

4.1. The fundamental postulate on which my whole theory of language is based is this: speaking, even speaking one's mother tongue, is a kind of work which requires mental and physical exertion; hearing, i. e. understanding what is uttered, is equally something that requires mental and physical exertion. A lessening of this exertion must therefore be considered an advantage to the speaker and hearer respectively. Now, however, there are some people

who make light of this exertion and maintain that there is no labour involved in linguistic intercourse; "no error could be greater than that of thinking that the native speaker should have any difficulty in using the numerous forms found in his language" (Chr. Möller in *Acta Jutlandica* I, Aarhus 1929). The difficulties in German mentioned by Paul and Schuchardt (as quoted Lang. 325) have no existence so long as the speaker is allowed to speak his native dialect, but only if he tries to speak the standard language, for each individual learns only one norm perfectly, and in that even the most intricate flexional system offers no difficulty at all. Now, is this true? One might just as well say that walking requires no effort at all, once the child has learnt to walk, or that there is no difficulty to the grown-up person in writing by hand. The truth is that under normal conditions no one is *conscious* of effort in all these activities, but that they nevertheless require exertion. This is seen, e. g. when a person is under the influence of great quantities of strong alcohol, or is dangerously ill, or unusually tired: then his walk becomes unsteady, his writing indistinct and illegible, and his speech full of blunders in articulation, in the formation and correct use of flexional forms, and he is unable to express the simplest thoughts in a clear and intelligible way.

4.2. If this is not proof enough, I must ask the reader to consider such facts as these: The correct use of the German cases governed by prepositions is not learnt till after children have reached the school age (Clara u. W. Stern, *Die Kindersprache* 248). Germans hesitate whether to say *mit Ihrem*, or *mit Ihrer früulein tochter* (Curme, *Grammar*<sup>2</sup> p. 547 with many quotations). On the whole German books on "Sprach-

richtigkeit" (by Andresen and others) are much more full of grammatical things that are felt as difficult by the natives than similar books in English. Mauthner (*Kritik der sprache* 3.27) says that German genders are a torment not only to foreigners, but to natives as well: there is no German that with perfect certainty can tell the gender of all substantives, even Jakob Grimm did not know if one should say *der euter* or *das euter*; dictionaries require *der ungestüm*, but Schiller writes *das ungestüm*, etc. etc. Sütterlin (*Werden und wesen der sprache* 1913, p. 149) gives examples of German flexion and adds: "All this makes great claims on the memory not only of foreigners, but also of the natives, and it would perhaps be better to free the brain from this burden in favour of other and better activities." Gabelentz says (*Die Sprachwissenschaft* p. 257): "Our rich, profound mother-tongue is certainly not the most easily managed thing (*das bequemste*). It is so difficult that we feel it ourselves as soon as we have come to be somewhat at home in such a language as English or French."—If I have here spoken so much of German difficulties, it is chiefly because Chr. Møller, too, takes his examples from that language, which he thinks is easy to the Germans themselves. But other languages might perhaps with equal justice have been adduced.

4.3. No language is perfect in every respect, but the chief defects lie in different spheres, those of German most in the complicated grammatical structure, those of English in the complicated structure of the vocabulary, in which expressions for cognate concepts are often taken from different sources (indigenous, French or classical). Even when words come from the same source, complications

arise from intricate rules for stress and derivation, which often cause phonetic changes in the kernel, e. g. *admire*, *admirable*, *admiration*; *capable*, *capacity*; *please*, *pleasant*, *pleasure*; *luxury*, *luxurious*. In less familiar words known chiefly in the printed form (technical or scientific terms) even educated speakers often hesitate where to put the stress.

4.4. How are defects in a language brought to one's notice? Chiefly in the same way as defects in one's momentary speech (above 2.7): the speaker feels that he is not understood by one way of expressing his thoughts, and therefore has to find out unmistakable expressions. The next time he encounters the same difficulty he shuns the faulty term on the principle that the burnt child dreads the fire, and by dint of such repeated experience a word may at last get completely disused.

An inconvenience common to most languages, though not found to the same extent in all, is the great number of homophones or homonyms; they are found more often in short than in long words: in Chinese they abound. These may be due to convergent sound-changes, as when *sea* and *see* are now pronounced alike, or *knight* like *night*, or to borrowing, as in the case of *reign* and *rain*, or to various other causes. But, as pointed out in my paper *Monosyllabism in English* (see Lingst. p. 307 ff.) the danger of ambiguity in such a language as English from these homophones is much less than one might at first suppose, because words are never spoken isolatedly, and the whole situation and especially the context of the whole utterance aided by intonation, etc., will nearly always make the meaning perfectly clear: one understands not words, but

sentences. Also it should be noted that polysemy, where 'one and the same word' has several meanings, is exactly analogous to cases in which two or three words of different origin have come to have the same sound.

4.5. In many cases the inconvenience of having homophones has been remedied by the dropping out of use of one of the words, thus *let* = 'hinder', OE *lettan*, on account of the other *let*, OE *lætan*. Other instances are mentioned in Lingst. p. 399, see also the lists in MEG I 11.74 of words completely or partially extinct in connexion with the lesser vowel-raising (by which the earlier [ɛ:] became [i:] like the earlier [e:]): *mead*, *mede*; *mete*; *quean*; *teem*; *ween*; *weal*. But I also point out that in some of these cases one of the words had already before the vowel-raising become rare and therefore could not offer any great resistance to the coming into existence of that sound-change. In other parts of MEG vol. I are given similar lists of words which had become homophones on account of sound-changes. In most English dialects the word *son* has disappeared and is replaced by *boy* or *lad*; the reason is said to be homophony with *sun*, though misunderstandings would seem to be little liable to occur in this case.

Diez already saw the cause of the disappearance of some Latin words in the Romanic languages in the conflict with homonymous or too similar words (Gr. 1.53). Thus *vir* and *ver* on account of *verus*, *mas maris* on account of *mare*, *bellum* on account of the adj. *bellus*, *habena* on account of *avena*, *puer* on account of *purus*, etc. He explains in the same way Fr. *soleil*, as *sol* coincided with *solum*.

On the theoretical question what damage homophony may cause, and reactions against it, see E. Öhmann, *Über homonymie*

*und homonyme im deutschen* (Helsingfors 1934); the introduction deals especially with Gilliéron's and other French scholars' exaggerated ideas of the destructive influence of homophony; but see Frey's long list of dead homophones, *Grammaire des Fautes*, p. 66 ff Cf also Robert J. Menner in the periodical *Language*, vol. 12, p. 229 ff.

4.6. Many scholars—myself among them—prefer calling the languages 'descended' from Latin *the Romanic languages* on account of the other meanings of the word *Romance*.

In some cases ambiguity is avoided by adding a word that makes the meaning clear, thus, while *go to the left* is unambiguous, we have to say *the left-hand corner*: *left* represents a rare old word *left*, *lyft*, meaning 'weak', which has accidentally fallen together with the participle of *leave*. But the same addition is found in *right-hand corner*, where a similar ambiguity is caused by the double meaning of one and the same word. Cf. the additions in *cabinet minister*: *minister of the church*. In Chinese a regular expedient is by placing two words together, which may each of them be misunderstood, while the collocation is clear; cf. E. *court-yard*, *subject-matter*.

In this connexion I may mention a few instances of inconveniences caused by words being similar, though not completely alike in sound. The names of the 6th and 7th month are often misheard in the Danish, German and Dutch forms *juni*, *juli* (similarly in Spanish, Russian, etc.); but a useful differentiation has been introduced in Eng. *June*, *July*, Fr. *juin*, *juillet*, Ital. *giugno*, *luglio*. The English words *starboard* and *larboard* were so often mistaken in commands to the helmsman that it was thought advisable in 1844 to substitute officially the word *port* for the latter



term. In spite of the many other meanings of *port* this was in that connexion perfectly unambiguous.

4.7. In some cases the inconvenience of a word having more than one meaning can be remedied only by the occasional use of a clumsy circumscription. Eng. *man* means (1) human being in general, (2) male human being, opposed to woman, (3) grown-up male being, opposed to child. I have elsewhere quoted Miss Hitchener's line which caused so much amusement to Shelley: "All, all are men—women and all", and Carlyle's "Atrabiliar old men, especially old women, hint that they know what they know." Now, for the sense (1), *human being*, or even *human* alone as a substantive, is used, as in Wells's "Marriage is not what it was. It's become a different thing because women have become human beings." Anthropology has been defined facetiously "the science of man embracing woman." In French similarly there is no word for sense (1); in a Danish-French dictionary *menneſke* is rendered *homme*, [*être*] *humain*, . . . *personne*, pl. *des gens*, *du monde*. In scientific works one may find "un être humain sans acception de sexe". In sense (2) an amplification of *man* is also sometimes felt to be necessary to make the meaning perfectly clear, as when Edward Carpenter in speaking of the deification of the Babe writes: "It is not likely that Man—the human male—left to himself would have done this; but to woman it was natural."—*Child* similarly has two meanings, one as related to its parents, and one as opposed to the grown-ups; there is nothing illogical in the seemingly incongruous sentence "He pets his children even after they have ceased to be children."

In such, and many other cases, we are obliged to take

a linguistic expression as it has been handed over to us, no matter how inconvenient it may be. We speak of the *United States* and think of those of North America only, but the name is not good, even if it were only because no adjective can be formed from it; it strikes one as singular at Niagara to hear one fall termed the *American fall* and another the *Canadian fall*, though otherwise Canada is reckoned a part of America. It was quite natural in English to form the expression *the near East* of Turkey (and Minor Asia) and *the far East* of China and Japan, but it is a little strange in California to find newspapers use these expressions in the same way though China and Japan lie to the west of that country. It was a pity that Columbus in discovering America thought he had come to India, for it leads to the double meaning of *Indian* (1) = G. *indier*, *indisch*, Dan. *indier*, *indisk*, and (2) = G. *indianer*, *indianisch*, Dan. *indianer*, *indiansk*. In the latter sense one must often use *American Indian*, or in scientific language *Amerindian* or *Amerind*, but in the ordinary language the inconvenience subsists.

## 5. Grammatical Homophony and Polysemy.

5.1. A special class of homophones is made up of what might be called grammatical homophones. In English the sound [kɪnz] may be either gen. sg. (*king's*), common case pl. (*kings*) or gen. pl. (*kings'*), thus distinguished in the ordinary spelling. A consequence of this ambiguity is the rare occurrence of the last-mentioned form—in two-thirds of Thackeray's *Pendennis* I counted only 13 instances

besides 14 in which it indicated time or measure. The form is generally displaced by a prepositional combination: *of the kings*, while there is no difficulty in using such gen. plurals as *men's*, *women's*. We do not hesitate to use plurals like *men servants*, *women writers*, with both substantives in appositional compounds inflected, but only one is put in the plural form in *maid servants* and *lady writers*, as *maids servants* and *ladies writers* would be misunderstood. But even with the further complication of a fourth value of the same ending as the third person sg. of all ordinary verbs this particular grammatical homophony does no serious harm to the comprehension of English sentences, as the context will show unmistakably what is meant, and therefore no other remedy has been called for than the extensive use of the preposition *of* instead of the genitive.

5.2. On the other hand serious mischief would have been caused by other actual or threatening grammatical homophones, which have therefore been felicitously discarded. The form *her* was at one time both the oblique case of the fem. and a possessive corresponding both to fem. sg. and to the plural, cf. G. *ihr*. In the latter sense it has been displaced by *their* from Scandinavian. OE *he* (m.), *heo* (f.) and *hie* (pl.) tended in ME to become homophonous; instead of *heo* we now have *she*, and instead of *hie* the Scandinavian *they*. *His* in OE and ME was the genitive (possessive) not only of *he*, but of *it* as well. For a short time *it* was used in the latter function, as still in some dialects, but towards the end of the sixteenth century the new unambiguous form *its* came into use; it is never used in the Authorized Version of the Bible (1611) and

perhaps never used by Shakespeare though found in some old prints of his plays. But even if thus the worst defect is remedied, *his* is still polysemous, as seen in the two sentences: "Jack was very respectful to Tom, and always took off his hat when he met him. Jack was very rude to Tom, and always knocked off his hat when he met him." In Somersetshire dialect *Bill cut's vinger* means 'his own', *Bill cut ees vinger* means 'the other person's' (PhilGr 220 f.). In Standard English the ambiguity can often be obviated by adding *own* after *his*.

In French *son*, *sa* may refer either to a masculine or to a feminine; ambiguity is often avoided by additions: *son père à lui*, *sa montre à elle*.

Frei, Fautes 19, calls attention to the polysemy of Fr. "C'est lui qui la (= l'a, qu'il a) fait venir", which may mean 'who makes her come, who has made him come, who has made her come, whom he has made come'.

In such cases there is no remedy available except occasionally using nouns instead of pronouns, or turning the whole sentence in a different mould.

5.3. A particularly obnoxious case of grammatical polysemy was created by submissive politeness in German, when *Sie*, which meant both 'she' and 'they', came to be used as a pronoun of the 'second person' in addressing superiors or strangers. This often necessitates an explanation like 'ich meine Sie [strongly stressed] persönlich'. Grimm in this connexion speaks of "the sultry air of gallant politeness" found all over Europe and made even worse in Germany by pedantry; he rightly calls this *Sie* a blot on the German linguistic garb, ein flecke im gewand der deutschen sprache. The habit was unfortunately im-

ported into Danish, where now one may hear such bits of conversation as "Hvad er deres planer?" "Hvis, mine?" "Nej, de andres" ('What are their (or your) plans?' 'Whose, mine?' 'No, the other peoples'.')

Excessive politeness has in other languages, too, led to inconvenience in the words used to address the 'second person', thus in Dutch, where the original plural *jij* (*je*) or *gij* (*ge*) is used in familiar speech in addressing one person, and *jullie*, *jullui* (*jelui*) in addressing more than one (with hesitation in the verbal form: *jullie zegt* or *zeggen*), while *U* is the polite word, with remnants of its origin as a third person: *u heeft* or *hebt*, *u is* or *bent*, *u kan* or *kunt*, *u mag* or *moogt*. In Italian alongside of the polite plural *voi* in addressing one person we have *lei* (originally a dative) as a still more polite pronoun, or the use of the third person without any pronoun. Mussolini has recently ordered the use of *voi* everywhere instead of *lei*.—In English politeness has led to abolishing the original second pers. sg. *thou*, *thee*, and to the universal use of *you*. It corresponds both to German *du*, *ihr*, and *Sie*. Having the same form of address to higher and lower, to familiars and strangers is decidedly a great gain from the purely human point of view, though it is sometimes inconvenient to have no distinction between the two numbers, but a plural is expressed by occasional additions, *you girls*, *you people*, in recent use *you lot*; on U. S. *yóu all* (also *you alls*) and *yous* see MEG II 2.8 and *American Speech* vol. IV.

5.4. I shall now mention some instances in which old syntactic ambiguities have been gradually discarded, at any rate partially. After the abolition of OE *weorðan* the only auxiliary for English passives was *am*, etc., which in

some cases leads to want of clearness: *the door was shut at 9 o'clock* may mean 'war geschlossen' and 'wurde geschlossen'. *His bills are paid* may mean two things as in: 'they are paid regularly every month', and 'they are paid, so he now owes nothing'. But in course of time we see a gradually more frequent use of other forms, so that now instead of the old *is taken* we have *is taken*, *has been taken*, *is being taken*, and *gets taken*, more and more clearly differentiated. Where the Authorized Version has 'Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake' (the Greek original has a perfect participle), later translations have 'Blessed are they that have been persecuted', and 'Happy are those that have been persecuted' (MEG IV 8.3). 'Thy prayer is heard' becomes 'has been heard'. His bills get paid regularly every month | . . . have been paid.

5.5. Similarly with the auxiliaries for futurity. Where German easily distinguishes the three notions of volition, obligation, and simple futurity: *er will sehen, soll sehen, wird sehen*, English (and Danish) has only two words: *will see, shall see* (*vil se, skal se*). Both have come more and more to be used for simple futurity with obscuration of the sense of volition and obligation. The express indication of futurity has in English been carried out to a greater extent than in Danish, so that the old use of the present tense in that sense has been generally restricted to cases in which it implies a previously settled plan ('We start to-morrow for Scotland') and to conditional and temporal clauses: 'If he recovers his children will be glad | when he recovers he will go to the Riviera'. But the present is not possible in other cases where Danish still uses it. 'I don't know if he will recover = jeg veed ikke om han kommer sig.' And

*will* in a conditional clause means distinctly volition: 'I shall be glad if you (he) will come'.

But neither *shall* nor *will* has *everywhere and in every combination* lost the original meaning of obligation and volition, respectively. If complicated rules for the use of *will* and *shall* are now "the great bugaboo of the English language" (Krapp), this is due to various causes, the chief of which are the usual conflicts of the desire for ease (this has favoured the prevailing use of *will*, which tends to displace *shall* everywhere) and that for clearness (MEG IV 18.9). But it should also be remembered that originally English had no expression in its verbs for futurity, but used the present tense alone, so that the language has gained considerably by the adoption of the two auxiliaries.

On account of the frequent use of *will* to denote simple futurity its use to indicate real volition has been greatly restricted, and other verbs such as *want*, *choose*, *mean*, and *intend* must often be used instead. Some biblical passages with the earlier use will now be misunderstood. The Authorized Version 'I will giue vnto this last, euen as vnto thee' is changed in the Revised Version into 'It is my will to give' and in the 20th Century Version 'I choose to give'. Similarly 'Get thee out, and depart hence, for Herod will kill thee', has been changed into 'would fain kill thee' and 'means to kill you' (MEG IV 15.5).

In Danish a distinction has developed between the simple and the periphrastic passives: *han vil høres* expresses volition, *han skal høres* obligation, but *han vil blive hørt* simple futurity, *han skal blive hørt* the same combined with a promise on the part of the speaker.

In this connexion it is interesting to observe that Diez (Gr. 1. 53) ascribes the loss of the Latin forms for the

future tense to homophony: the old forms would coincide partly with the imperfect of the indicative, partly with the present of the conjunctive. Hence the combination infinitive + *habeo*.

5.6. In another field, too, we see a growing precision and clearness through the gradual discarding of some more or less ambiguous uses of the preposition *of*, which like Fr. *de* may be called the preposition 'of all work'. *He was robbed of his father* might formerly be used equal to the corresponding active sentences 'his father robbed him' and 'some one robbed him (deprived him) of his father'. Now *by* has come to be the universal preposition with a passive for what in the active is the subject: 'He is loved by everybody'. Similarly also with nexus-substantives, where the ambiguous use of the genitive (subjective or objective like Lat. *amor dei*) and of *of* in the same two functions has given way or is giving way to the use of *of* exclusively for the object, where in some cases *for* or *to* may be found, and of *by* for the subject of the action (not till the 19th century?). But the use of a genitive or a possessive pronoun, is by no means obsolete. The present use may be illustrated first in examples with both subject and object expressed like: 'our pursuit of happiness | his preference for Maria | the suppression by the pope of the order to which he belonged | every government of one nationality by another is of the nature of slavery and then in examples with one of them only: 'his (S) decision | the man's (O) trial | come to one's (O) assistance | a single man in possession of a good fortune (O) must be in want of a wife (O) | that immemorial object of desire, the government by the wise and good (S)'. Many examples in MEG V ch. 7.



French *par* and German *durch* have, though in a lesser degree than E. *by*, come to be used in some similar cases, because they are clearer than *de* and *von*.

In such cases there can have been no actual wish to improve language (his mother-tongue) on the part of the speaker of the moment, but his general wish to be understood as fully and unmistakably as possible, in connexion perhaps with instances in which he has been actually misunderstood or not understood if he used one particular auxiliary or preposition, may gradually lead to giving up altogether the infelicitous expression.

## 6. Degrees of Utility.

6.1. What linguistic distinctions are necessary for the understanding, or desirable, or superfluous? In many instances this may be doubtful, and the answer may be dependent on individual taste. Vendryes (L 411) thinks that the development of the two Latin forms for questions, *num vides* and *videsne*, was a precious gain and their disappearance a loss. But the modern expressions 'vois-tu?' 'do you see?' and 'ne vois-tu pas?' 'don't you see?' seem equally clear and just as valuable. Meinhold in a review of my *Language* says that as a rule primitive languages ('languages without written literature') are more precise than our languages of culture: in Nama 'we' is different according as it refers to two or more men or women, or men and women together, also as the person addressed is included or not. 'Simplification in our languages, he says, is often attained at the expense of clearness (deutlichkeit), and in case of emergency one must remedy the want through all kinds of

additions and circumlocutions.' Now I think most Europeans are content with their *we* supplemented in comparatively rare cases (*we girls, we sailors*, etc.), instead of having in each and every case to specify what is meant by *we*.

It is the same with regard to vocabulary. We civilized people are content with one word for 'wash', where Cherokee has a number of different words according to what is washed, my head, the head of somebody else, my face, my hands or feet, clothes, dishes, etc. We have one word 'cow', the Zulu has no such general word, but special words for 'white cow', 'red cow', etc. Tasmanians had no word for 'tree', but special names for each variety of gum-tree and wattle-tree. Several similar examples are given in Lang., p. 420 f., and it would be easy to multiply them from any account of the languages of savages. Civilization means among other things increase of abstract terms and decrease of superfluous special words.

6.2. I shall now mention some fields in which the greatest precision is desirable or even indispensable, and to which the principle of value is therefore specially applicable, viz. numerals and negative assertions.

The first and most often used numerals seem in all languages to be so distinct in sound that no mistake is likely to occur in ordinary conversation. Generally even the first sound is different, as in English, German, French, Italian, etc., 1 2 3 4, and when the initial is the same in two subsequent numbers, as in Dan. *to tre, sex syv*, Eng. *four five, six seven*, Fr. *cinq six sept*, etc., the rest of the word is easily distinguished; spoken French now even tends to pronounce end-consonants which were formerly mute: *cinq* [-k] *sous, sept* [-t] *francs*. In shouting, however, and

over the telephone, words with the same vowel are apt to be misheard for one another; consequently various remedies have been resorted to. As German *zwei* and *drei* in commands were often misheard, the otherwise extinct form *zwo* (originally feminine) has been officially revived for 2 in military circles, and this is now extensively used in phoning and also elsewhere. "Beim maschinengewehr wird kommandiert: *ein* strich, *doppelstrich*, *drei* strich" (Horn, *Sprachkörper*<sup>2</sup> p. 107). In calling the numbers on the telephone in English *nought* was so often misheard for *four*, or inversely, that it was finally settled to use [ou] for 0. In Rio Janeiro the number *seis* (6) was liable to be mixed up with *treis* (3) or *sete* (7), so in calling the number on the phone one has to say *meia dúzia* 'half-dozen'; 66 is called *meia meiadúzia*, which is often abbreviated into *meia-meia*—which thus leads to a curious and nowhere else paralleled sense-development from 'half' to 'six'. (Lingst. 440). In Switzerland it is recommended to say *septante* and *huitante* to distinguish 70 from 60.10 and 80 from 4.20. (Frei, *Fautes* 70). In Denmark the numbers 5 *fem* and 6 *sex* having the same vowel were found inconvenient in shouting the numbers in the game of ninepins, hence *sex* was in one part of the country arbitrarily expanded into *sexe* with a long [e] added, and in another part replaced by *kegler* 'ninepins'.

6.3. In the higher numerals the desirability of keeping two series, e. g.  $14 = 4 + 10$  and  $40 = 4 \times 10$ , clearly distinct is shown in various ways, see e. g. Gk *tetlerakaideka* : *tetlerakonta*, Lat. *quattuordecim* : *quaranta*, Fr. *quatorze* : *quarante*, and similarly in the other Romanic languages (in which Lat. *-decim* is no longer conspicuous; the

words are now indissoluble wholes). In the Gothonic languages the distinction is made clear by adopting in one series the ending 10, though sometimes different from the numeral in itself (Dan. *-ten* as against *ti*, Swedish *-ton* as against *tio*, Eng. *-teen* with strong stress and long vowel as against *ten*), and in the other series the substantive *tigjus* 'decade', cf. Gothic *fidwortaihun* : *fidwortigjus*, Eng. *fourteen* : *forty*. But the distinction may be made even more clear by choosing for the first member of compounds a lateral form of the numeral: Eng. *fourteen* and *forty* had originally different vowels; Dan. has *fjorten* as against *fire* 4, *fyrre* (*type*) 40, *sejsten* 16 (though officially spelt *seksten*) : *sex*, and shortenings in *tretten* 13, *sytten* 17, *atten* 18, *nitten* 19. Thus all the numbers from 13—19 have different spoken vowels from the simplex with the sole exception of *fem* : *femten*. The vowels in these composite Danish numerals are extremely difficult to explain historically, see Brøndum-Nielsen, *Glda. gramm.* 1. 175, 217 ff., 279 f., 337, 339, 343, 378; 2. 182, 392. But the tendency to make them distinct is unmistakable. (On the Danish tens see above 3.7). In numerals it is desirable to have forms that are at once easy to perceive, and synthetic forms are here for once often preferable to analytic ones. Still, as the words in German and other languages show, it is no absolute requirement to have unity-forms. But the opposition Fr. *quatre* : *quatorze* : *quarante*; *six* : *seize* : *soixante*; Dan. *fire* : *fjorten* : *fyrre* : *sex* : *sejsten* : *tres* certainly has the great advantage of being at once unmistakable.

I may here mention the numeral system of a totally unrelated language, which shows another nation's instinctive feeling for the importance of distinctiveness in this field. In Turkish (Osmanli) we find:

## EFFICIENCY IN LINGUISTIC CHANGE

1 bir	10 on
2 iki	20 yirmi
3 üç	30 otuz
4 dört	40 kirk
5 beş	50 elli
6 altı	60 altmış
7 yedi	70 yetmiş
8 sekiz	80 seksen
9 dokuz	90 doksan.

But the numerals 11—19 are simply composite *on bir*, *on iki*, etc.

By the way it is curious that 60, 70, 80, 90 are evidently more composite than the earlier tens. The break from 60 on is noticeable, as in the OE with *hund*: *hundseofontig* 70, *hundeatig* 80, *hundnigontig* 90; it is probably due to old Babylonian mathematics, to which we owe also our division of an hour into 60 minutes and the division of the day into twelve hours.

The distinction between cardinal and ordinal numerals is generally important enough for separate forms to be used. But in some cases, where mistakes are not liable to occur, the distinction is dispensed with, and the easier cardinals are used where logic would require ordinals, thus in the indication of the year, 1940 means the 1940th year; often also after book (book II), chapter, paragraph and page. In French also with the days of the month: *le sept juillet* (except *le premier*) and sovereigns: *Louis quatorze*. The word *number* really makes the following numeral into an ordinal: No. 17.

6.4. Another field in which precision is more than elsewhere of importance, is the opposition between positive and negative utterances. To prevent a negation from being

overlooked we find that in many languages the negative word is placed as early as possible in the sentence; note particularly in prohibitions Gk. *mē*, Lat. *noli*, E. *don't*, Dan. *la vær å*. Further there is a tendency, when the negative adverb has become very short and therefore liable to be missed in hearing the sentence, to replace it by a stronger and fuller word: Latin *non*, English *not*, German *nicht* instead of earlier *ne*, French *ne* strengthened by added *pas*, etc. See my book *Negation* (1917) and MEG vol. V ch. 23. Of particular interest is the English development of special verbal forms in connexion with the weakening of *not* into *n't*. These negative forms are in themselves distinct enough from the positive ones in those cases where *n't* forms a separate syllable: *did*: *didn't*, *would*: *wouldn't*, *you should* [ʃəd] *go*: *you shouldn't go*, etc. Not so when the added *-nt* would enter into one syllable with the preceding auxiliary: here distinctness is obtained by the selection of an existing variant form of the auxiliary while the chief form has been reserved for positive sentences. Alongside of *will* we had ME *wol*, alongside of *shall* [ʃæl] we had [ʃaul], of *do* [duː] there existed an old form with [oː]; hence the clear opposition: *he will* [hiː wil, hiːl]: *he won't* [hiː wount]; *we shall* [wiː ʃæl, wiː ʃl]: *we shan't* [wiː ʃaːnt]; *I do* [ai duː]: *I don't* [ai dount]. See for particulars in other verbs (*can*: *can't*; *am*: *a(r)n't*, *ain't*, etc.) MEG V 23.1, ff.

6.5. Nouns (and pronouns) in our languages distinguish case and number. Which of these is the more important? No doubt the latter, which corresponds to a palpable difference in the outer world, while this cannot be said of the former. In view of the innumerable intricacies of the forms and employments of the originally eight Aryan cases,

with their frequent falling together (syncretism: dat., abl., loc., instrumental, even sometimes nom. and acc.) it seems to be a hopeless task, as some grammarians endeavour, to assign one definite ending or one definite function to each case in primitive Aryan. Hence it is easy to understand why in historic times we witness a constant reduction in the number of cases, thus most radically in English. Here, for instance, the distinction between nom. *caru, tunge* and acc. *care, tungan*, the dat. in *-e*: *cyninge*, the pl. in *-u*: *fatu*, and the dat. pl. in *-um*: *dagum* have been given up. The most useful distinction, judging from the result, seems to be that between the nom.-acc. on the one hand and the gen. on the other, but even the latter has been given up in Romanic, and though it is vigorously alive in English, its existence is to a great extent undermined by the *of*-combination.

In English the distinction between singular and plural is very clearly marked in nouns, except for a comparatively small number of nouns (*sheep, deer, swine*). But it is noteworthy that in some combinations the precise indication of the plural has been found superfluous because a preceding numeral as adjunct is a sufficient sign of plurality: *three score, five thousand, three million people*. Corresponding rules are found in other languages, e. g. Dan. 6000 *mand*, *alle mand*; German 6000 *mann*, *alle mann*, but the extent to which the rules are employed is very restricted in our languages. In Magyar and Turkish, however, it is a general rule that the singular form is used everywhere after a numeral. If the names of some animals that are hunted are often used without the plural mark (*snipe, wild duck*, etc.) the reason is that in this connexion they are regarded as mass-words, in which the distinction between one and more than one is unimportant; cf. having *fish* for dinner.

6.6. In Old French we find — apart from a few survivals of genitive cases -- a distinction between the nominative and an oblique case, thus e. g. with a faithful rendering of Latin conditions:

Nom. sg	Obl. sg	Nom. pl	Obl. pl.
murs	mur	mur	murs
filz	fil	fil	filz
sire	seignor	seignors	seignors
on	homme	hommes	hommes.

The *s* of the nom. sg. which originally appeared only where Latin had an *-s*, is sometimes transferred to such words as *peres*, Lat. *pater*, while the *-s* of the acc. pl. is transferred to such nom. fem. pls as *filles*. *Sire* and *seigneur* have been differentiated, and so have *on* and *homme*, though in another way. But towards the end of the Middle French period case distinctions were given up, and *s* was used everywhere as a sign of the plural. When final *s* was dropped in pronunciation, one form only remained in nouns; and the same is true with regard to *filz*, in which *s* is exceptionally kept. The difference between the two numbers is now in most combinations shown by adjuncts only: *le mur*, *le(s) mur(s)*; *ma fille*, *me(s) fille(s)*.

The history of German nominal flexion shows an increasing tendency to do away with case distinctions and to make the distinction between singular and plural clearer. Thus the OHG case system in the singular, e. g. *hano*, *hanun*, *hanon*; *zunga*, *zungûn*; *herza*, *herzin*, has been simplified, but on the other hand the new plurals *väter*, *brüder*, *mütter* are now distinct from the singular, and a great many new masculine plurals in *-er* have been created: *götter*, *geister*, *wälder* — Willmanns, Gramm. 3 p. 387, uses the charac-



teristic expression 'als willkommenes mittel der plural-bezeichnung'. It is interesting to note the difference between e. g., *die schicksale zweier männer* (in which the *-er* of the numeral has been retained as the only sign of the genitive) and *die schicksale der zwei männer* (where it is dropped as superfluous after the article). The genitive has generally more power of resistance than the other oblique cases, but even that is now threatened, syntactically and formally, chiefly, but not exclusively by the growing tendency to employ the preposition *von*, see A. Debrunner, *Aus der krankheitsgeschichte des genitivs* (in *Berner Schulblätter* 1939). Cf. also Havers HES 130.

There are a great many shrewd remarks on cases in general and on their relation to the distinction between animate and inanimate in H. V. Velten's paper *The Accusative Case and its Substitutes* in the periodical *Language* 8, p. 255 ff. I cannot deal with all the problems treated by him, but will call attention to his discussion of the use of *a* in Spanish and Portuguese and *pe* in Roumanian before what used to be an accusative. I have noted with special pleasure his words, p. 259, that "Essential (N.B.) flexional endings never disappear for purely phonetic reasons", and his words on linguistic economy, p. 261.

6.7. While thus the distinction between one and more than one is felt everywhere as important in substantives, the same is not true of the separate indication of duality as distinct from plural in general. The old Aryan dual has disappeared in all languages except for a few survivals in Slovene and in some Lithuanian dialects. According to Meillet's well-known theory its gradual disappearance in old Greek is due to an advance in civilization. One is led by this explanation to remember the numerous to us unnecessary distinctions found in the languages of uncivilized

nations mentioned above (6.1). But are social conditions really the motive power in such phenomena?

6.8. English shows conclusively that when number and case are indicated in the primary words an indication is perfectly superfluous in secondaries, cf. *a good child, a good child's, good children, good children's*. The definite article is uniformly *the* in both cases and in both numbers. (By the way, I should like to see an explanation of this uniformity over against the great number of forms in OE: *se, seo, þæt, þone, þæm, þæs, þara*, etc., from a strict 'sound-law + analogy' point of view without regard to value.) This loss of distinctive concord renders possible a great number of useful combinations like *my wife and children* (Fr. *ma femme et mes enfants*) | *all her life and hopes and griefs* | *the future life and adventures of Walter*, etc. English feels little difficulty in combinations like *Royal Academician, a tragic dramatist, a high churchman, a mutual admiration society, old and new bookseller, what size gloves do you take?* (Examples in MEG II ch. 12). But in German, where secondaries are inflected, such occasionally occurring combinations as *eine reitende artilleriekaserne, cusgestopfter tierhändler, ein ehemaliger baumwollene nachtmützenfabrikant* are necessarily ridiculed. — In English it is also possible to say *a* (or *this*) *delightful three weeks*, or *for one short seven days*, without feeling any incongruity in combining singular and plural with the same uninflected adjunct. When an adjective should be used as a primary, the added *one* or *ones* serves to show the number: *the fat one: the fat ones*.

6.9. When the outer differences between words for intimately connected ideas or conceptions are exceptionally

great, such unhandy words are often discarded as superfluous. Thus English *hither*, *thither*, *whither* have to a great extent given way to *here*, *there*, *where* (sometimes with *to* added), and *hence*, *thence*, *whence* to *from here*, *from there*, *from where*, though the old words may still be used figuratively in the sense 'in consequence of this, that, what'. An agreement is thus obtained with other expressions for local relations, cf. *go home*, *from home*, etc. (*Hitherto* is now exclusively an adverb of time, not, as formerly, of space as well.)

## 7. Glottic.

7.1. In some cases we find that something that was originally a purposeless purely mechanical change has afterwards been turned to account as a useful modification of a word: from irrelevant it has become relevant, or *glottic*, as I call it Lingst. p. 214–217. This term has been accepted by Trubetzkoy and Alfred Schmitt. Thus the differentiation of *of*: *off*, at first merely a weak and a strong form of the same word, has led to two distinct words. This, in connexion with the syntactic development dealt with above (5.7) relieves *of* of parts of its task as 'preposition of all work'. *With* also had the corresponding two forms from the same cause, but here it could not be usefully differentiated, and the weak form [wið] survived alone. Similarly *that* has become two words, [ðæt] as a demonstrative pronoun and [ðət] as a particle (conjunction, relative), though in writing the two words are spelt the same. OE *ealswa* has split up usefully into *also* and *as*, and in German we have a similar differentiation into *also*

and *als*, though the meanings of both the strong and the weak forms are different in the two languages. OE *to* has become *to* and *too*.

7.2. The dropping of final *-n* before a consonant in the following word while it was retained before a vowel at first had no meaning at all, as still in the two forms of the indefinite article: *a man : an end* (cp. F. *un chien : un ami*). But in some cases it has been utilized: *my* and *mine*, *no* and *none* have different functions as secondaries and primaries, and the *-n* has even been extended in dialects and vulgar speech to *ourn*, *yourn*, *theirn* as primaries to the secondary *our*, etc. And *-en*, which was at first joined as a meaningless addition to some verbs, has now become an independent suffix to form verbs from adjectives, as in *blacken*, *sweeten*, *lessen*, see my article in *Acta Linguistica* 1.48 ff.

7.3. Mutation (*i*-umlaut) at first occurred mechanically whenever a subsequent syllable contained an *i* or *j*, and did not influence the meaning of the word. But while the mutated forms were retained in those cases in which they pervaded the whole of a word and its derivatives, such as *end*, *send*, *king*, *bridge*, the discrepancies caused between closely connected forms of one and the same word were in many cases gradually discarded. We have no longer any survivals of mutated forms in the dative like OE *men*, *dehter*, *fet*, *bec*; nor in the comparative, like OE *lengra*, *brædra*, *giengra*, with the solitary exception *elder*, whose application has been restricted in favour of the regular *older*. An adjective like *gylden* has given way to *golden*, and many of the old mutated plurals have disappeared, such as OE *bec*, *friend*, now *books*, *friends*. Thus also the

change in the second and third person of verbs: *siehest* from *seon*, *ciest*, *fielp* from *ceosan*, *feallan* has been given up. But the difference between non-mutated and mutated forms has become glottic, i. e. has been turned to useful account, firstly to distinguish the singular from the plural in a well-known number of substantives: *men*, *feet*, *geese*, *teeth*, *mice*, *lice*; note the plural *women* [wimin], in which the spelling completely disguises the spoken form, — and secondly to derive verbs from nouns: *deem*, *feed*, *bleed*, *breed*, *fill*, *knit* from *doom*, *food*, *blood*, *brood*, *full*, *knot*. But this means of derivation has in a curious way been encroached upon by the new-creation of verbs from the non-mutated nouns: *doom*, *food*, *brood*, *knot*; and inversely by that of substantives from the mutated verbs: *feed*, *bleed*. Anyhow the conditions in these cases in English, in which mutation is the only grammatical means, are different from the corresponding ones in German or Danish, in which we have besides the vowel-change an ending: pl. G. *füsse*, Dan. *fødder*, vb. G. *füllen*, Dan. *fylde*, etc.; here mutation is not to the same extent glottic as it is in the English instances named above.

What I have here said of *i*-mutation is totally different from E. Sapir's treatment of the same subject (*Language*, 1921, p. 183—204), where he gives mutation as a typical example of phonetical law generally and deals at length with the historical development of the plurals Eng. *feet*, G. *fusse*. He believes in phonetic 'drifts' that are the same in English and German though operating in the same consistent direction at some centuries apart: G. *füsse* is three centuries behind Eng. *feet*; both were developed after the separation of the two dialects from the common ancestor. But to him the commonly accepted theory that mutation was at first a purely mechanical change does not go deep enough, and he hints at another explanation. I quite agree with him that the "tendency to isolate phonetics and grammar as mutually irrelevant

linguistic provinces is unfortunate" (p. 196). — indeed I said the same years ago in Lang. 298 and in Lingst. 224—225—but I cannot follow Sapir when he seems to think (p. 198) that it was a 'lucky accident' that the change of the radical vowel preceded the loss of the ending because in the hypothesis of the opposite sequence "there would have been no difference between the singular and the plural. This would have been anomalous in Anglo-Saxon for a masculine noun . . . All the Germanic languages were familiar with vocalic change as possessed of functional significance. Alternations like *sing, sang, sung* (AS *singan, sang, sungēn*) were ingrained in the linguistic consciousness . . . failure to modify the vowel would soon result in morphological embarrassment. At a certain moment the *-i* ending of the plural (and other endings with *i* in other formations) was felt to be too weak to quite bear its functional burden. The unconscious Anglo-Saxon mind . . . was glad of the opportunity afforded by certain individual variations, until then automatically canceled out, to have some share of the burden thrown on them . . . Phonetic changes may sometimes be unconsciously encouraged in order to keep intact the psychological spaces between words and word forms."

Now, did Sapir seriously mean us to believe that mutation occurred chiefly in order to prevent the OE masculines from being alike in singular and plural? Why should not they be allowed to be alike, just as many neuters were through the loss of *-u* (OE *hors, horn*, etc)? Did the Anglo-Saxons feel that these words as *masculines* were more entitled than neuters to have a separate plural? And was that their reason for modifying the vowels of hundreds of other words in which it had no morphological significance? (I mentioned some above, *brycg, end, cýning, cīest* etc.). The theory seems to me too fantastic for serious acceptance.

7.4. Of the second great Aryan vowel-shift, which I have ventured in English to term *apophony* (after Fr. *apophonie*, a translation of G. *ablaut*, which is often used in English; Sweet says *gradation*) — the same is true as of mutation, though in a lesser degree, that it tends to become glottic. It has become so in *sing : sang : sung* and some other verbs,

but this was not carried through in OE and the other old Gothic languages, for *u* was found also in the plural of the preterit, and the vowel-change was nowhere the exclusive means of showing the form, as an ending was used besides it to indicate the function of each particular tense, number and person. Sapir's remark, quoted above, p. 57, therefore is not quite to the point.

## 8. Prevention.

8.1. In the phenomena dealt with so far we have seen how an inconvenience in a language has been removed by something which proved better fitted for the purpose of the language. Now the question arises: Does a language ever *prevent* an inconvenience? This is expressly denied by Paul, *Prinzipien der sprachgeschichte*<sup>4</sup> p. 251: "Es gibt in der sprache überhaupt keine präkaution gegen etwa eintretende übelstände, sondern nur reaktion gegen schon vorhandene." But some linguists think differently. In Lang. p. 362 I adduced what might be a case in point: In classical Latin there existed a strong tendency to leave out final *-s*, but that was checked because it would in many sentences lead to too strong ambiguities when *-s* was used as the only sign for some case-distinctions, and the word-order was not yet fixed. But later word-position became more and more subject to laws, and prepositions were used more extensively, and when, after the splitting up of Latin into the Romanic languages, the tendency to slur over final *-s* knocked once more at the door, it met no longer with the same resistance: final *-s* disappeared first in Italian and Roumanian, then in French, and is now disappearing in

Andalusian. — That *-s* was preserved in Latin on account of its “*valeur flexionnelle*” is now also recognized by Grammont, *Phon.* p. 364.

8.2. The idea that a language sometimes prevents something that might be dangerous is the basis of the modern theory of phonetic *differentiation*, as developed first by A. Meillet in *MSL* 12 p. 14 ff., and later especially by Grammont, *Phon.* p. 229 ff. The word *differentiation* is here used as a technical term for a special phenomenon, while the same word is generally used by linguists in a much wider sense (thus also above 7.1). Grammont uses such expressions as: “The cause of the differentiation is generally speaking the unconscious fear of an assimilation which would disturb the economy of the word. . . . For fear of letting the two phonemes be fused [*se confondre*] they tend involuntarily to emphasize their differences.” Would it not be better instead of invoking this psychological factor simply to say that for some unknown reason two consonants immediately after one another are not always treated in the same way, sometimes their articulations approach each other, and sometimes they drift more apart. We may call the former change assimilation and the latter differentiation, but that is merely giving names to the two phenomena, and not finding out their causes. And let us be honest enough to admit that no one has ever been able to point out the conditions under which here one and there the other change has occurred in the languages examined. When two vowels meet, Grammont says that in order to prevent their contraction “which upsets [*bouleverse*] the economy of the word through making it lose one syllable, the subconscious fear of this assimilation draws the atten-



tion of the organs [! In another place he says "les organes phonateurs"] towards the point where the vowels meet", and this leads first to an embryonic consonant and then to a full consonant between the two. As if we did not find innumerable instances of words becoming shorter by one or even two syllables through the loss of vowels. The whole chapter in Grammont's book seems to me full of phonetically and psychologically contestable assertions; Meillet's article is on the whole more sober. But the whole theory of differentiations as found in these two writers needs a thorough revision. This has been done to some extent by Millardet (*Études de dialectologie landaise*, 1910) and Hallfrid Christiansen (NTS 9.345 ff.). They separate from it the 'segmentation' found e. g. in *-mpt-* from *-mt* (Latin *emptus*, etc.) and *-ndr-* from *-nr-* (Greek *andros*, Eng. *thunder*, etc.) and *-mbr-* from *-mr-* (Greek *mesembrinos*, F. *chambre*, Eng. *timber*, etc.). Here it looks as if a consonant had been inserted, but that is really a delusion due to our defective alphabetic writing. What has really happened is merely a slight want of precision: the organs should move at exactly the same moment, but in *mt* and *mr* the lips linger and in *nr* the tip lingers just a fraction of a second after the other organs have moved. It can hardly be believed that this should be due to the fear of an assimilation, which in the two last cases seems quite improbable. In *sumpsi*, *sumptum* an assimilation would be more likely to occur, but it would split up the paradigm of the verb: the connexion with *sumo*, *sumere*, etc., would, however, be kept up by the retention of *m* without any *p* being necessary.

8.3. While to my mind it has not been absolutely ascertained that an impending linguistic danger can be averted

(thus *ante eventum*), there can be no doubt that when an inconvenience has begun to appear its further spreading can be prevented. Such was the case with Latin final *-s*, which had begun to be dropped in Cicero's time: this was checked (above 8.1). Another case in point is the dropping of the English genitival *-s* after another *s*. This was very frequent in former centuries, Shakespeare writes, e. g., *Adonis breath*, *Phoenix throne*, *Ceres blessing*, *Charles wain*, *Clarence death*, *your Highness pardon*, etc. But he has also the *prince's doom*, *Judas's own children*, and this form, with the grammatical homonymy avoided and the genitive clearly kept distinct from the common case, has now prevailed: *St. James's Park*, *Charles's wain*, *Jones's children*, etc., except in a few isolated cases: *St. Agnes' eve*, *Hercules' share*, *Pears' soap*. Cf. above 5.1 and 6.5.

## 9. Semantics.

9.1. If it is true that many of the grammatical changes we witness in the historical development of the best-known languages have proved on the whole beneficial in the long run, the question naturally arises if the same holds true of *semantic* changes. But in view of the bewildering multitude of directions in which words and combinations of words may and do change their meanings it seems quite impossible to assert or to deny any universal tendency for the better or for the worse in this department. Is an extension or a restriction, a widening or a narrowing of the signification of a word an advantage or a disadvantage? It may be both, or rather, in most cases it neither improves nor impairs the language in which it occurs. Which is the

better meaning of such etymologically identical words as E. *stove* — G. *stube*, Dan. *stue* 'living-room' or E. *chin* — G. *kinn*, Dan. *kind* 'cheek'? No one can tell.

9.2. Yet it may not be altogether hopeless to look out for progressive tendencies even in this field. By being used in a transferred sense a word may acquire a special kind of usefulness and fill a gap in the vocabulary. Take the word *horn*: as originally used of a cow's or similar animal's horn it expresses in itself a combination of many special concepts each of which may be isolated in the mind of a speaker. If he wants a name for a drinking vessel of a shape similar to that of a cow's horn he simply calls it a *horn* and thus creates a name for such vessels. Or it may be used of a musical instrument of the same shape. The similarity in shape is perhaps less obvious when the word is used for the protruding feelers of some insects; cf. also the horns of a dilemma, and horns as a symbol of cuckoldry (it used to be a customary insulting gesture to hold a pair of fingers up to the forehead like a pair of horns). It is different when by speaking, e. g. of a button of horn we create a name for that particular substance without regard to the shape. Thus we see how denominations for various concepts which would otherwise have been nameless have come about by a transferred use of one and the same word — decidedly a gain for the language. An equally useful polysemy is similarly brought about when *foot* is used for something else than the limb of an animal: the foot of a mountain, foot as a measure of length or in metre, etc. In such cases polysemy is far from being harmful like those considered above (4.4); the new applications are useful because in each instance of their use the words

cannot be misunderstood for the thing at first meant by them.

Transferred applications of the most usual words are inevitable in any language, and very often they are advantageous or even indispensable. Think, for instance, of such a word as *old*: old times; my new house is an old one, and my old house was a new one. Or of verbs like *go*: time goes, the watch goes, it is going to rain, he goes in for astronomy, or *come*: it comes true, it came to pass, come to blows, to grief, come across someone, come of it what will, come round, etc. etc. *Youth* is used not only = 'being young, young age', but also collectively of all young people, and individually = 'young man'. Such examples might be multiplied ad infinitum.

9.3. In French the word *tête* (Lat. *testa* 'pot') has taken the place of *chef* (Lat. *caput*) as the name of one part of a body. This is often mentioned as an instance of a slang word ousting a more dignified word, but it has not been generally noticed that a useful distinction has been gained by the existence side by side of the two words *tête* in a material and *chef* in an immaterial meaning. The usefulness appears from the same distinction being made in various ways in other languages. German *kopf* (also a slang word meaning at first 'pot' like *tête*): *haupt*, cf. *hauptsache*. Dutch *kop* as in *hals over kop*: *hoofd*, cf. *hoofdzaak*; yet corresponding to German *kopfweg* we have *hoofdpijn* 'headache'. In Danish two pronunciations of the word generally written *hoved* are used: [høːðə] 'tête', with [høːðpiːnə] 'headache': [høːvəð] in compounds like *hovedsag* 'chief matter', *hovedstad* 'capital', a distinction which is not, it is true, recognized by everybody. In Russian we have the

popularly developed *golova*, with *golovnaja bol'* 'headache' as distinct from the originally Church-Slavonic *glava* with the adjective *glavnyj* 'principal'.

9.4. It may be said that the specialization of *deer* in English (cp. in the old general sense G. *tier*, Dan. *dyr*) is an advantage because the language possesses other words for the original meaning: *beast* and *animal*, the former often with a disparaging nuance which the latter as the more scientific name has more seldom. The existence of the two words *breath* and *spirit* has allowed the earlier synonym *ghost* to be specialized in the sense 'spirit of the dead' apart from such survivals as *give up one's ghost*. Other examples of similar specifications are seen in *napkin*, formerly meaning the same thing as handkerchief, and when *clean* and *pure*, which in former times were used indiscriminately, are now more neatly distinguished: we no more say *clean gold*. Useful distinctions are now made between *convince* and *convict*, *persecute* and *pursue*, which were formerly close synonyms; cf. also *nourish* and *nurse*, which like the last-mentioned derive from one and the same source. Marlowe was still able to speak of *erring stars* = 'planets'. Now *err* has always a disparaging sense. *Admiration* formerly meant 'wonder' without implying approval as it now does; *wealth* meant 'well-being' in general, now it means 'riches'. *Room* formerly like Dan. *rum* and G. *raum* meant 'space', now it is specialized as part of a house; *reverend* formerly 'revered, venerable' in a more general meaning than nowadays; *property* might be used for 'proper character or function', now it means only 'thing possessed, possession'. *Purchase* might be used for obtaining by any means, not as now for obtaining by

paying the price. *Providence* had formerly the Latin meaning of 'foresight' besides its present meaning of divine providence. *Prevent* also had more of its etymological meaning 'anticipate, arrive first' in order to help, while now it has specialized in the sense 'stop, hinder'. *Provoke* similarly might mean 'call forth' (as still in p. indignation or enquiry), now it is 'irritate' generally. In many of these words it is noticeable how the original meaning known from the etymology has been given up in ordinary use. It is thus evident that the changes in meaning, which must have been brought about quite gradually, are due to the man in the street, who knows nothing of Latin and cares nothing for etymology. But the result has been an increase of perfectly precise words for necessary concepts not otherwise clearly expressed in the language. In some cases remnants of the old general meaning are still to be found.

9.5. It is curious to observe how often words that were formerly innocent or morally neutral have in course of time been as it were degraded or reduced to a lower sphere. *Damn* is now a swear-word, but formerly it meant 'judge' or 'condemn' in general. *Churl* meant 'rustic, countryman' without having the disparaging character it now has. *Backside* might be used of the rear part of any thing. *Cunning* and *crafty* meant 'clever' or 'strong', but are used now only in a bad sense. *Corpse* might be said of any, not only of a dead body. *Lewd* meant 'ignorant' or 'vicious' in general, and *wench* meant 'girl', now both words imply sexual incontinence. *Silly* from the meaning 'happy, blessed' (like G. *selig*) has come to mean 'harmless' and now 'foolish, imbecile'. *Monster* used to mean 'wonder', now it is an enormous or enormously wicked being, often imaginary.

*Vulgar* from meaning 'used by everybody' (*the vulgar tongue*) has come to mean 'used by the lower class only'. *Usury* meant 'interest', but is now used of illicit or exorbitant interest only. *Abuse* from meaning 'misuse' has come to mean 'revile', *Preposterous* has lost the etymological meaning 'placed in wrong order' and has become a fitting word for 'absurd', excellent from its length and weight to express contempt. *Fearful* and *dreadful* used to have the meaning 'full of fear' in the active sense of fearing; now they have been reduced to the meaning 'inspiring fear', 'terrible'. In the same way *painful* has lost the meaning 'laborious'. But in all such cases specification as above means precision, thus a kind of progress.

On such changes of meaning as make words echoic and thus expressive see below 10.9.

## 10. Aesthetic Feeling.

10.1. In the preceding chapters I have taken what might be termed a purely utilitarian view, calling those changes beneficial which further the intellectual object of imparting thoughts to others and thus make a language more practical. But man does not live by bread alone, and language has other tasks besides being a useful tool for communications. It is used not only for speaking but also for singing, and talking is often nothing more than a mere playing with sounds to amuse oneself and one's hearers. I have dwelt at some length on this aspect of language as a plaything in Mank. p. 5 ff., quoting among others M<sup>me</sup> de Staël, who called it "an instrument on which one likes to play and which exhilarates the mind just as music does with some

people and strong drink with others" — and Malinowski, who said that among the natives of Trobriand (near New Guinea) language was essentially a means to bring about a pleasant contact between man and man, a sociable instrument quite apart from the contents of the words uttered.

Swinburne when asked what he meant by some line in one of his poems is reported to have answered: "I am sure I don't know, but isn't it pretty?" And the same is true of innumerable refrains and tra-la-la's in popular songs which please the ear and fascinate aesthetically without really saying anything. Even in those utterances which do convey meaning considerations of euphony, i.e. phonetic beauty, play their role: not only in poetry, but in prose as well we prefer those sequences of sounds that flatter the ear and produce a harmonic impression. Rhythmic songs cheer and make manual work easier and more entertaining; the importance of rhythm among savages has often been dwelt upon, but we civilized people are no less subject to its charm, see especially Karl Bücher, *Arbeit und Rhythmus* (1902) and G. Cederschiöld, *Rytmsens trollmakt* (1905). Many changes in the place of stress tend to bring about an alternation of strong and weak syllables and thus constitute an aesthetic gain; note thus the shifting in *he speaks Chinese*: *a 'Chinese book | he rushed down'hill*: *a 'downhill rush | this after'noon*: *'afternoon tea*, etc. A pleasant rhythm is also found in a great many habitual combinations such as *bread and butter* (we do not say *butter and bread*, but with this arrangement the same rhythm is obtained in G. *butterbrot*, Dan. *smørrebrød*); cf. further *cup and saucer*, *rough and ready*, *rough and tumble*, *free and easy*, etc. (GS § 245). Note that such a rhythmic alternation is not only aesthetically pleasant, but is really a saving of effort for the organs



compared with a long string of uniformly strong or uniformly weak syllables. Metre is, at any rate to a great extent, an application of the principle of human energetics.

**10.2.** A repetition of the same combination of sounds is pleasant to the ear; this has led to the extensive use of rime in modern poetry and also in everyday combinations such as *fairly and squarely, highways and byways, snatch and catch, it will neither make nor break me*, etc.; cf. also such popular words as *handy-dandy, hugger-mugger, hocus-pocus, higgledy-piggledy*, etc. Here we have the same stressed vowel followed by identical sounds; but the ear is also pleased with a repetition of identical consonants surrounding a variety of vowels, generally in the order *i* — a back vowel (*a* or *o*): *zigzag, chit-chat, dingle-dangle, fiddle-faddle, flip-flap, knick-knack, tick-tock, tit for tat*, etc. And finally we may here mention alliteration, i. e. the repetition of the same initial sound, which plays such a large part in old Gothonic poetry and is found in a great many familiar phrases: *faint and feeble, rack and ruin, might and main, part and parcel, care killed a cat, neither make nor mar me, as cool as a cucumber*, etc.

**10.3.** Now it is curious to notice that although such similarities of sound as have been exemplified seem to be favourites all over the world, there are others which are more or less avoided. This is especially true of the immediate sequence of an identical short syllable within the same word. The dropping of one of these syllables is the phenomenon termed haplogy: *England* from *Engla-land*, *eighteen* from OE *eahtatiene*, *honesty* from ME *honestete*, *barn* from OE *bere-ern*, *humbly* from ME *humblely*, *Glou-*

(*ce*)*ster*, more or less vulgar pronunciations like *pro(ba)bly*, *Feb(rua)ry*; from other languages may be mentioned Lat. *nu(tri)trix*, *sti(pi)pendium*, Gk *am(phi)phoreus*, ModGk (*di*)-*daskalos*, Fr. *cont(re)role*, *ido(lo)latric*, G. and Dan. *ka(mo)-mille*. The explanation of this leaving out of a syllable is probably that given by Grammont Phon. p. 336, but also much earlier by Curtius, that the repetition here would produce the impression of stuttering—an impression which the other repetitions mentioned in 10.2 could not produce.

This kind of haplology is thus psychologically different from another kind (treated together with it by me in LPhon. 11.9 and MEG 7.8) in which it is not a whole syllable but one or more consonants that are left out: *par(t)take*, *wan(t) to go*, *las(t) time*, *ye(s) sir*, *Sn(t) Thomas*, *a goo(d) deal*, etc., G. *we(nn) nicht*, Dan. *α(m) muligt*, *po(st)stempel*, G. *je(tz)zeit*, etc., Here the reason is an acoustic illusion: the sound is (or the sounds are) perceived as belonging just as well to what precedes as to what follows. But the same kind of illusion may here and there be produced in the case of a syllabic haplology

**10.4.** Haplology is often termed syllabic dissimilation and thus viewed as a subdivision of the larger class of linguistic changes which are comprised under the name of *dissimilation*. Very much has been written on this subject, see especially M. Grammont, *La dissimilation consonantique* (1895), K. Brugmann, *Das wesen der lautlichen dissimilation* (1909), and Grammont, Phon. (1903) p. 269—337. Other literature in Brugmann p. 5 and in Hermann, *Lautges. u. anal.* 62 ff.—Before entering on theoretical questions let me first give a number of familiar examples.

*r—r*: Span. *árbol* < *arbore* | Eng. *marble* < F. *marbre* | Ital. *Mercoledì*, Span. *Miércoles* < *Mercurii dies* || Ital. *Federico* | Ital. *frate* | F. *patenôtre* | Ital. *pelegrino*,

- F. *pèlerin* (cf. Eng. *pilgrim*) < *peregrinu-* | Dan. *vg. balbér* < *barber*.
- l—l: F. *nivel, niveau* < *libell-* (cf. Eng. *level*) | Lat. *-alis* and *-aris*: *liberalis, familiaris, stellaris*.
- n—n: F. *orphelin* < *-ninu* | F. *licorn* < *unicorn-* | Ital. *Bologna* < *Bononia* | Span. *Barcelona* < *-nona*, cf. Span. *alma* < *anima* | F. *nappe* < *mappe*.
- ŋ—ŋ: Walker, in 1791 said that *-ing* should be pronounced in *writing*, etc., and especially after *n*: *sinning, beginning*, but that the best speakers say *singin, bringin, flingin*.
- Stops: Ital. *cinque*, F. *cinq* < *quinque* | F. *quincaille* < *clincaille* | Eng. *taper* < *papyru-*.
- Vowels: Ital. *agosto* (cf. F. *août*) < *augustu-*.

In reduplication we must suppose that the original practice was to give the full word twice to enforce the impression, but later the first form might be abbreviated, as when it was used in the present or perfect as a subsidiary means of indicating the tense of a verb; then it might in certain cases be altered by dissimilation, as in Lat. *spopondi, steti, stiti*. The vowel in such forms as *cecedi, pepigi*, too, is due to dissimilation. Thus also in Goth. *haihait*, where the first *ai* means only short [e], but the second is the diphthong. Consonants are dissimilated in Goth. *saislep, faifrais, gaigrot*. The reduplicative character is totally obscured in the isolated OE survivals *heht, heort, reord, ondreord*.

10.5. The reason for dissimilations in general must evidently be psychological, but the above-mentioned fear of appearing as a stutterer can only be adduced in rare

cases such as possibly the giving up of the abbreviated reduplication in the conjugation. Brugmann's explanation by means of *horror aequi* is only a figurative expression. The speaker before pronouncing a word, or while pronouncing it, thinks of the whole and has to issue orders to the various organs concerned in the production of the sounds that make it up, and a command may be sent down to one organ a moment too early or too late. The inclination to make mistakes naturally increases with the number of identical or similar sounds in close proximity. Hence numerous 'slips of the tongue' or lapses such as have been collected from the individual speech of himself and his friends by R. Meringer (*Versprechen und verlesen*, 1895, *Aus dem leben der sprache*, 1908). This, I think, explains the frequency of the phenomenon with *r*, especially in its trilled tongue-tip form, on account of its complicated articulation (which also occasions frequent transpositions, as in *bird*, OE *bridd*, *third*, OE *pridda*). Many of the examples given by Grammont are only occasional slips or 'nonce-words'. When the result of such lapses becomes settled as a permanent feature of a language, the reason is no doubt connected with the aesthetic feeling of the nation in question: the new form is felt as more euphonic than the old one; cf. Walker's words about *-ing*: "a repetition of the ringing sound in successive syllables would have a very bad effect on the ear." But the sensibility to cacophony or euphony varies from individual to individual and from nation to nation; hence it is never possible to predict, or to give rules for, *when* a dissimilation will or will not take place in closely similar circumstances. The difference in degree in this kind of sensibility probably explains the fact that dissimilations seem to be much more frequent

in the languages of the more artistic Romanic nations than in Gothic languages.

It is, of course, very laudable that Grammont tries to find out the 'laws' of dissimilation, i. e. not laws of the occurrence or non-occurrence of dissimilation, but laws of which sounds are kept and which are omitted or changed in those observed cases in which dissimilation has occurred. But his one comprehensive law, 'la loi du plus fort', does not help us a bit, for it says nothing but the self-evident rule that the stronger sound is kept and the weaker one is not. And, as Brugmann justly remarks, we are not much better off for his many special laws (originally 20, the number has now been reduced) if we want to find out which sound is stronger than others, on account of its position in accented syllables or in groups. Anyhow there is no reason, as is sometimes done, to date a new epoch in linguistic science, or even a new science, *la phonétique évolutive*, from the appearance of Grammont's book on dissimilation.

10.6. Dissimilation as here viewed has (as already remarked more than a century ago by one of the pioneers of comparative linguistics, Pott) some connexion with the well-known rule by which the good stylist avoids a repetition in close proximity of the same syllable(s) or the same word(s). Pott gives as examples German "die die menschen lieben, geliebt werden werden" and "mit desto sicherer nachsicht". In English for the same reason we use *early* and not *earlily* as an adverb and avoid such adverbs as *heavenlily*, *masterlily*, *timelily*, etc., using *in a heavenly manner* or similar circumlocutions.

The immediate sequence of the same *word* may also be

avoided on account of the same aesthetic feeling: in German instead of *morgen morgen* one says *morgen früh*, similarly Dan. *imorgen tidlig*; correspondingly a repetition is avoided by using two different forms for 'morning' in English *to-morrow morning*, French *demain matin*, Italian *domani mattino*, which may be shortened into *domattino*. That is preferred to *who* after an interrogatory *who* (MEG III 4.8<sub>5</sub>). — Bally LV<sup>2</sup> p. 51 says that in French, parallel to *moi je me révolte*, one would be expected to say *nous nous nous révoltons* with first an emphatic and then two weak *nous*, which would be obscure and ridiculous. Instead one says *nous on se révolte*. This, however, is hardly the whole explanation of the curious French substitution of *on* for *nous*, which is found in many instances; in Sandfeld, *Syntaxe du Français Contemporain* 1.335 ff. I find quotations like: 'Si encore on avait deux ou trois jours devant nous | On n'a pas nos jambes de vingt ans | On ne se quitte pas une seconde, Myrtille et moi | Toi et moi, on est fait pour se marier'. One of the reasons for this use of *on* is evidently (as also noted by Bally) the desire to get rid of the heavy form of the verb in *-ons*, which (together with that used after *vous*) is often the only one deviating from the otherwise common and simple form: *je, tu, il, ils* [fāt] etc. (Thus a similar cause as that which, according to Meillet (LH p. 149 ff.) in many languages has led to the substitution of an auxiliary + a participle for the earlier often irregular preterit.) But even combined these reasons do not exhaust the matter, for we find in Italian a similar tendency to use *si* (= Fr. *on*) for 'we': in PhilGr 216 I quote passages like: 'la piazzetta dove noi si giocava | la signora Dessalle e io si va stamani a visitare', etc. The 'generic person' (= I + everybody else) is thus substituted for the ordinary 'we'

(= I + some others). But this really leads us outside the theme of this chapter.

**10.7.** To return to the general subject of likes and dislikes: a preference for certain sounds or sequences of sounds is often decisive for the names parents will give their children or the names chosen by owners of their new-built villas.

An aesthetic feeling for what is reputed beautiful is found in the curious *sladkoglasije* (sweet-talking) in the Russian dialect of Kolyma, through which the phonemes *r*, *l* and *r'*, *l'* (palatalized *r*, *l*) are discarded in favour of *j*, though the greater part of the population are perfectly able without any difficulty to pronounce the discarded sounds, which they maintain are unbeautiful (Roman Jakobson, in Prague 4.266).

Sometimes a liking for a sound may be due not to its intrinsic qualities, but simply to the fact that it is associated with persons whom one admires or looks up to for some reason or other. But very often a dislike is caused by nothing else than that it is different from what one is accustomed to oneself. Villagers for that reason often ridicule the speech of a neighbouring village. In America elocutionists will teach the sound [aː] — as used in British English and New England — in words like *grass*, *pass*, *laugh*, while the sound [æ] or [æː] found in great parts of the U.S. is distasteful to them. When a Milwaukee teacher in dictating some words for spelling says, "Now, children, don't [læːf] when I say [laːf]," she has the feeling that the vowel she has artificially learnt will sound ridiculous to her pupils, as it does perhaps to herself. Ridicule is a powerful weapon in linguistic development.

We find further aesthetic influences when some words are shunned by some people merely because their sound seems to them unpleasant; this, however, is largely individual. F. N. Scott, in an article, 'Verbal Taboos', in *The School Review* 20.361 ff. (1912) has from his students collected a number of words they disliked on account of their sound, e. g. *lank*, *bosom*, *succinct*, *squalor*, *fulsome*. (The two last-mentioned aversions are probably due to the sense just as much as to the sound, and the same may be partly true of *lank*.) A specially interesting instance is the following: "A considerable number of persons hate the plural form *women*, as being weak and whimpering, though the singular *woman* connotes for the same persons ideas of strength and nobility. It is for this reason perhaps that *woman's building*, *woman's college*, *woman's club*, and the like, have supplanted in popular speech the forms *women's building*, *women's college*, etc. It is noteworthy also that in the titles of magazines and names of women's clubs the singular in most instances has displaced the more logical plural."

10.8. Sometimes the dislike to a form or word may be due to unpleasant associations. Why has *ass* not the same vowel as *pass*, *class*, etc., but is generally pronounced [æs]? Probably because [a's] would fall together with the (southern) pronunciation of *arse*. But as a term of contempt one may still hear [a's]. Possibly the substitution of the word *donkey* as a common name for the animal may be due to the same association. In MHG *after* was used, nearly with the same sense as Eng. *after*, Dan. *efter*, Icel. *eptir*; but it was thought improper because often used with the sense 'backside', and *nach* (originally meaning *near* like



Eng. *nigh*) took its place (Öhmann, PBB 55, 230). But in compounds like *afterrede*, *afterwelt* the word survives.

It is possible that the rarity in recent times of the verb *flee* (never found, for instance, in Macaulay) is due to the homophony with *flea*; *fly* is used instead, but *fled* is in constant use.

On account of unpleasant associations *closet* is not used now as much as formerly for a small room (Storm *Engl. Philologie* 509), *parts* is avoided for the same reason, and in the 16th and 17th c. *occupy* was used so much in an obscene sense that decent people shunned it, see Sh H4B II. 4.161 and quotations in Farmer and Henley (also *occupant*, *occupying-house*), cf. also *doing* in NED. — The French précieuses said *soixante sous* to avoid the final syllable of *écu*.

But it is outside my plan here to enter more deeply into the subject of euphemism and veiled instead of blunt expressions for what is thought obscene or disgusting.

10.9. Something related to the gratifying of the aesthetic sense is seen when a linguistic change brings about something that is felt as a more or less close correspondance between sound and sense. Though the number of words in which the sound is symbolically expressive of the sense - - echo-words - - is very considerable in most languages (see Lang. ch. XX and the chapters on *phonétique expressive* in Grammont Phon. - the most valuable part of his book), and though many of these seem to have come into existence in comparatively recent times, it is not so easy to find many examples in which a word from not being expressive in this sense has become so later on. I shall here give a few of those mentioned in Lang.: the verb *patter* is from *pater-*

(*noster*) and at first meant 'repeat that prayer', but now it has come to be associated with echoic words like *chatter*, *prattle*, *jabber* and to mean 'talk rapidly or glibly'; hence also the sb. *patter* 'speechifying, idle talk'. *Husky* 'full of husks, of the nature of husk' now as an echo-word means 'dry in the throat, hoarse'. *Tip*, *trip*, *sip* also are more expressive than the words *top*, *troop*, *sup*, from which they are recent developments. *Pittance* now means 'a small allowance', and *miniature* 'a small picture', but originally the words were used for any pious donation and for any image painted with *minium*, without regard to size. These words have joined all those words in various languages in which the vowel *i* symbolizes smallness (see my paper on the symbolic value of *i*, *Lingst.* p. 283 ff. Note also such pet-names for a child as *kid*, *chick*, *kitten*). *Roll*, G. *rollen*, and even more Fr. *rouler*, Dan. *rulle*, seems to possess a perfectly adequate sound for the movement denoted by the verb, but that cannot be said of Lat. *rotulare*, from *rota* 'wheel', from which they are derived. All these words thus have become echo-words inadvertently, as it were.

Through an increasing number of such echo-words the language has gained in picturesqueness, and it should be remarked that sound-symbolism really is a saving of effort to the learner and user of the language.

But the theme is not exhausted by echo-words proper. The sounds of many words outside this class are felt more or less vaguely as appropriate to the meanings connected with them. In his valuable little book *Speech* (1930) J. R. Firth gives on p. 50 ff. many apt illustrations of cross-associations in classes of words which strict etymologists of the traditional school do not treat as belonging together. The word *slump* is associated on the one hand with a great

many words, often of a pejorative kind, beginning with *sl-*: *slack*, *slouch*, *slush*, *slaggard*, *slattern*, etc. etc., and on the other hand with *bump*, *dump*, *thump*, *plump*, *sump*, etc. Similarly we have *sn-*words like *sneak*, *snack*, *snatch*, *snip*, etc., and equally suggestive groups with *sm-* and *sw-*. Such instinctive correspondencies evidently heighten the value of a language as a means of expressing and communicating thoughts and feelings.

## 11. Fashion.

11.1. The preceding chapter on the aesthetic feeling leads us naturally to a consideration of the role of fashion in linguistic development. Some writers (Schuchardt, Meisinger) long ago compared linguistic changes to the changes of fashion, and E. Tegnér even says that 'as a matter of fact a language is nothing but a fashion prevailing within a certain circle.' There is a good deal of truth in this, though one should not think of such things as the changing fashions in ladies' hats: hats and clothes can be, and are, changed much more rapidly than a language can, because it is necessary to have new clothes from time to time, and it is possible to buy a new hat every year: a society lady does not like to be seen with an old hat, while equally rapid changes in a language would make mutual comprehension impossible. Changes in language should rather be compared with those changes which take centuries, or at any rate decades, to penetrate, fashion in the furniture of our houses, or in table manners, or in literary styles and genres, or such changes in musical taste as are represented by the names Mozart, Beethoven, Wagner.

There is, however, one department of language in which changes are rapid, slang, catch-phrases, oaths, in which people, especially young people, can indulge their desire for something fresh and new, which they think funny or witty or *chic*, while the old expressions which they liked a few years ago, now appear to them stale and out-worn (cf. Mank. ch. VIII). We may think also of such short-lived literary fashions as euphuism and the corresponding movements in other countries (gongorism, *préciosité*, *marinism*).

A longer-lived literary fashion has now been evident for a century and a half, I am thinking of the growing preference for what may be called a democratic style: long involved sentences with many dependent clauses and many learned words and classical allusions have been giving way to short crisp natural sentences with a preference for the native vocabulary. In German, Dutch and the Scandinavian languages the same period has witnessed a similar movement with the disappearance of a great many foreign words through a sane purism, which is often half-conscious, while an excessive purism is often ridiculed. (With regard to purism I may be allowed to seize the opportunity to state briefly within a parenthesis what I take to be the 'energetic' point of view: the man who first introduces a foreign word into his mother-tongue generally finds it easier to repeat what he has learnt abroad or through a foreign book than to rack his brains for a fitting expression by means of native speech-material. But in thus following the line of least resistance as far as he personally is concerned he may often impose an unnecessary burden on his countrymen who may for a long time be saddled with a difficult term that is foreign to their usual language. But

the finding of an adequate native substitute generally requires a good deal of natural tact, which has too often been wanting in consistent purists.)

After this parenthesis we return to the question of fashion and its influence on language.

11.2. It should be definitely understood that the fashion point of view does not apply to the ultimate cause of a linguistic change, but rather to the way in which it spreads. People will, in language as in other things, try to imitate their 'betters', thinking their way of talking more refined; the words and pronunciations used by the upper classes are taken as standards, and those found in the lower classes only are shunned as vulgar or plebeian ('common' in the derogatory sense of that word). And what is refined in this social sense is often thought beautiful or nice by one nation only, no matter what it may be from an objective point of view (if objectivity can be found in matters of taste).

Sometimes we see that vulgar and aristocratic pronunciations agree in opposition to the received standard: thus in the ending *-ing*, which is made into *-in* in the low classes as well as in a certain aristocratic (horsey) set: *huntin'*, *yachtin'*, etc. In the 18th century *-in* was more in use among educated people than it is now (MEG I 13.11 ff., cf. also above 10.4).

11.3. Fashion in pronunciation sometimes seems to have originated with women. Thus the forward pronunciation of ME long *a*, which has now become [ei], began before 1600; in 1621 Gill, who himself made only a quantitative distinction between *mal* and *male*, mentions the sound *e*

in *lane*, *cambric*, *capon* as found in "nostræ Mopsæ[?] quæ quidem omnia attenuant." Similar utterances by Sir Thomas Smith (1567) and Mulcaster (1582) are quoted Lang. p. 243. According to Trubetzkoy (Prague 7.21) women in the Mongolian dialect of Darnhat shift all back and central (mittlere) vowels somewhat forward.

11.4. The whole question of fashion in language has recently been taken up in an original way by the Dutch linguist H. L. Koppelman, *Die Ursachen des Lautwandels* (Leiden 1939). As the title shows he is one of those writers who primarily think of sound-changes rather than of other linguistic changes. To him the essential thing is not articulation, but the acoustic impression, the 'ring' (klang) of a sound, but much of what he says of this opposition and on phonetic questions in general seems to an old phonetician like myself greatly exaggerated or erroneous. He ascribes phonetic changes partly to climate, but chiefly to changes in fashion or national taste or preference for certain sounds. This he connects with national character, on which he speaks at great length and in a way that I shall not attempt here to summarize: though much seems perfectly just I have sometimes a feeling that the connexion between national characteristics and phonetics is a little loose: we are here, as it were, skating on thin ice. Italian to him is a typical example of aesthetically disposed languages (*ästhetisierende sprachen*), but of course its characteristic sounds have not been consciously thought out (*ausgetüftelt*). A transition from *a* to *o* is found only in rude or subjugated nations without any real taste or dignity; the vowel *a* impresses him as festive, official, even majestic. Some languages delight in rough sounds like German (*ach*) and Dutch,

others are more polished (glatt). The importance of a rising or falling rhythm is insisted upon in connexion with a nation's disposition to or dislike of rhetorics. On p. 79 ff. he divides languages into three groups, which he calls

(1) 'diskretionssprachen', suitable for being understood even when spoken very low, these are found in countries where the manner of living and the arrangement of the houses rarely make isolated conversation possible; these languages have no strong stress and incline to preference for voiced consonants.

(2) 'interieursprachen', spoken where climate and the arrangement of houses favour isolated conversations: strong stress and preference for voiceless consonants.

(3) 'rufsprachen', spoken especially by peoples living on small islands; tendency to extreme phonetic distinctness with long words and an excessive number of vowels; no strong stress, many voiceless explosive consonants and spirants.

Much of what the author says of these three types is interesting (thus the mention of Hawaiian as a typical rufsprache), but much seems extremely doubtful, and he himself is afraid that the reader will receive an impression of confusion from his survey and description of languages. When he says that French in contrast to Spanish is wanting in clearness (deutlichkeit) so that a man who reads French fluently is completely bewildered by the spoken language, I surmise that this is due to the different characters of the two orthographies and to defective teaching of French on the basis of the written language: if the author had been from the beginning taught on a phonetic basis with a proper sound-notation the result would have been different. Spoken

French has always appeared to me uncommonly distinct, much more so than many other languages. The book is full of clever suggestions, but they have not been carefully thought out in every detail. Much of it does not touch upon the subject of this treatise.

## 12. Phonologists.

In the very first program of the phonological school, which has of late years played such an important part in linguistic studies (*Actes du 1<sup>er</sup> congrès international de linguistes*, 1928, p. 33 ff.) the authors, Jakobson, Karcevskij and Trubetzkoy, say that the problem should be faced why changes take place (le problème du but . . . du finalisme des phénomènes phonétiques). We must according to them leave the rut of the young-grammarians who think that sound-changes are accidental and involuntary and that language does nothing designedly, sound-history being considered as a series of blind destructions, disorderly and deprived of any purpose. In contrast to this view they say that we must more and more take up the question of purpose and interpret phonetic changes teleologically, giving up the mechanistic conception. This would seem to be grist to my mill.

As a matter of fact one finds here and there in the publications of the phonological school teleological views expressed, see thus Prague 4.265 Jakobson (not very clear), 4.301 Sommerfelt and van Ginneken, 302 Bühler, ib. 8.268 Gougenheim, 298 Trubetzkoy and van Wijk. I was especially interested in Mathesius's remark 4.302 about the importance in Germanic languages of the beginning of words as con-



trasted with Czech, which simplifies initial consonantal groups while preserving end-consonants because they play an important role in morphology.

Phonologists often speak of a disturbance or disarrangement of the phonological system by a sound-change and of a reaction through which equilibrium is re-established. Let me add one example of the way in which a sound developed through rapid pronunciation has been 'phonematized', i. e. adapted to the phonological system of the language concerned. When an [u] loses its syllabic value before another vowel it would naturally become [w], but if this phoneme is not found in the system, [v] may be substituted. Thus we can explain Ital. *rovina* from *ruina*, *vedova* from *vidua*, Dan.  *Lovise* for *Luise* and *uvertig* for *uartig*.

Still it must be confessed that my point of view is different from that of the phonologists. They are interested exclusively in the phonematic systems and their shiftings; they speak of teleology in bringing about a harmonic vowel or consonant system arranged in their triangles and squares and correlations, but do not really discuss the question whether such changes constitute an advantage to the speaking communities, whereas this question is my chief concern: my interests in this treatise therefore centre round other linguistic departments than theirs, morphology and syntax, rather than the sound-system. In saying this there is, of course, no disparagement of the valuable new blood infused in linguistics through the studies of the phonological school.

The preoccupation with phonology also manifests itself when Trubetzkoy (Prague 85 ff) lays down the lines for a future artificial international language: he speaks only of what sounds

should be chosen as most universally distinguished, without considering at all the necessity of including in such a language all the *words* that have already become international and which at least European-American civilization cannot do without, but which often contain sounds that he would not admit, e. g. *real, ideal, bank, telegraf*, etc., with *r, l, d, b, g, f*.

### 13. Conclusion.

13.1. This is an old man's aftermath: he has returned to ideas that occupied him 50 years ago, and has tried to supplement what he said then and on later occasions. The whole is thus a series of variations on an old theme. Linguistic changes should be measured by the standard of efficiency judged chiefly according to the expenditure of energy, mental and physical, both on the part of the speaker and of the recipient. A series of phenomena have been treated, but throughout the treatment has been realistic and has dealt with facts, not fancies: the whole book contains not a single one of those starred forms that are found so often in linguistic work in attempts to reconstruct what has presumably lain behind the actually observed states of languages. This book moves wholly in the broad daylight of history, nearly always in the best-known European languages.

13.2. Linguistic changes are due to various factors which are not always easy to keep distinct, and the results are of many different kinds. In this volume I have chiefly considered the beneficial ones.

Shorter forms, which are therefore easier to handle, are in most cases produced by what has above been bluntly

called human indolence: slurring over and indistinct pronunciation of syllables that are intrinsically superfluous for the understanding of the whole (note stump-words, 3.6 f.); assimilation also often leads to shorter forms.

More regular forms are to a great extent due to the influence of analogy. They are evidently easier to learn and to remember than irregular ones.

More precise and distinct forms are as a rule due to the fear of being misunderstood or of not being understood in every particular; thus homophones are often discarded (4.3 f., 5) and differentiations are utilized glottically (7).

Smoother and more euphonious forms may be due to assimilation and sometimes to the aesthetic factor, which also to some extent is productive of expressive words in which the sense is symbolized in the form.

**13.3.** As a paradigm of the interplay of various factors in producing fewer, simpler and more regular forms we may take an OE and the corresponding modern English verb.

Inf. ceosan	choose
Pres. ceose	choose
ciest	chooses
ceosaþ	choose
Pres. Subj. ceose	choose
ceosen	choose
Pret. ceas	chose
curon	chose
Pret. Subj. cure	chose
curen	chose
Ptc. coren	chosen.

The net result in this case of a thousand years of linguistic evolution is an enormous gain to any user of the English language, because instead of being encumbered with an involved grammatical structure he can express the same ideas in a comparatively much simpler and handier way: the same initial sound, two vowels instead of four, the same sound [z] instead of three, no plural ending.

But I want to emphasize once more the fact that many of the small changes which help in the long run to bring about such beneficial results are, when looked upon isolatedly, nothing but momentary 'blunders' in an individual's speech and may thus be considered infringements of the linguistic norm which he otherwise observed in common with all his countrymen.

13.4. Outside the scope of this treatise lies the rise of the great national languages spoken by many millions (cp. Mank. p. 76). This too is a progressive tendency, for it is an advantage to anybody to give up his small parochial dialect and adopt the national standard language, by which he is enabled to get into touch with an infinitely greater number of people—not to mention the greater intellectual horizon offered in this way and the many social advantages, often of a material kind, which may be attended with the giving up of the local way of speaking. But this, I need hardly say, is not the same thing as pretending that the national language is intrinsically superior to local dialects: these may contain features that are in themselves of greater value than the corresponding features of the common language, e. g. picturesque, vivid, expressive words, and they may in some particular points be more advanced than the standard language, in which a conservative or

## EFFICIENCY IN LINGUISTIC CHANGE

even reactionary tendency is not infrequently fostered by its extensive use in literature.

No regard has here been paid to improvements in spelling, which in some languages have been considerable while in others they have been very slow and insignificant indeed.

In a period when pessimism and misanthropy are as it were forced on one because great nations are bent on destroying each other by the most diabolical means without the least feeling of pity for human suffering, and when all hopes of civilized and peaceful international cooperation are crushed for a long time to come—in such a period it has been a kind of consolation to me to find out some bright spots in the history of such languages as I am most familiar with. All is not for the worst in the only world we know and in which we have to live on in spite of everything.

ABBREVIATIONS OF BOOK-TITLES

**My own Books.**

- GS = Growth and Structure of the English Language (Leipzig 1939)  
Lang = Language, its Nature, Development and Origin (London 1922)  
Lingst. = Linguistica (Copenhagen 1933).  
Mank = Mankind, Nation and Individual (Oslo 1925).  
MEG = Modern English Grammar (I–IV Heidelberg, V Copenhagen 1909–1940)  
PhilGr = The Philosophy of Grammar (London 1924).

**Other Works**

- Bally LV = Bally, *Le Langage et la Vie* (see 1.3)  
Diez Gr = Fr. Diez, *Grammatik der romanischen sprachen* (Bonn 1876)  
EStn = *Englische Studien* (Leipzig 1877 ff.)  
ESts = *English Studies* (Amsterdam 1919 ff.)  
Frey Fautes = H. Frey, *La Grammaire des Fautes* (Paris 1929)  
Grammont Phon = M. Grammont, *Traité de Phonétique* (Paris 1933).  
Havers HES = W. Havers, *Handbuch der erklärenden Syntax* (Heidelberg 1931)  
Meillet LH = A. Meillet, *Linguistique Historique et Linguistique Générale* (Paris 1921)  
MSL = *Mémoires de la Société de Linguistique* (Paris)  
PBB = *Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache* (Halle 1874 ff.)  
Prague = *Travaux du Cercle Linguistique de Prague* (Prague 1929 ff.)  
Vendryes L = J. Vendryes, *Le Langage* (Paris 1921).

# ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS TO ANALYTIC SYNTAX

- P. 15, l. 7 from bottom *after unit. add* Cf. p. 102.  
 P. 17, l. 7 from bottom *read* G. Die sterne, die begehrt man nicht.  
 P. 18, l. 2 from bottom *add* G. German.  
 P. 20, l. 11 from bottom *read* ein vetter von mir.  
 P. 27, l. 20 *read* A red-hot iron 2(2-2) 1: a blue-green dress 2(3-2) 1.  
 P. 29, l. 12 primary *read* secondary.  
 P. 35, l. 13 *read* Er nimmt teil an dem gespräch.  
 P. 39, l. 7 *read* forstanden.  
 P. 39, l. 2 from bottom *add* Cf. 12 5.  
 P. 45, l. 9 from bottom *read* Die sterne, die begehrt mau nicht.  
 P. 47, l. 5 *add* Cf. 23 5, p. 81, addition  
 P. 53, l. 21 *read* Ces dispositions prises.  
 P. 68, l. 5 *add* L. memoria nostri tua X 2(O<sup>2</sup>) 2(S<sup>2</sup>).  
 P. 81, l. 6 *add*  
 He speaks as he did yesterday SV 3(3<sup>e</sup> SV 3).  
 Tom is as big as John, F. Louis est aussi grand que Jean. G. Max  
 ist ebenso gross wie Hans SVP 3(32 3<sup>e</sup> S<sub>2</sub>).  
 I hate him just as much as he me SVO 3(543 3<sup>e</sup> S<sub>2</sub> O<sub>2</sub>).  
 P. 82, l. 15 *socoro read* socorro.  
 P. 102, l. 10 from bottom An-exact *read* A more explicit.  
 P. 104, l. 12 from bottom *read* they do not, however, constitute  
 "parts of speech", but like V are included on account of their  
 syntactic value  
 P. 104, l. 1 from bottom are certainly *read* may be considered.  
 P. 107, l. 13 *read* For it is, indeed, curious that, etc.  
 P. 110, Case. Reference should be given to *Linguistica*, p. 322 ff.  
 (= System of Grammar, p. 23 ff)  
 P. 111, l. 17 *read* nebenordnung  
 P. 127, l. 9 *read* Black-blue dress 2(3-2) 1.  
 P. 128, l. 14 from bottom *read* F. une partie du vin, un grand  
 nombre de nos amis.

## FOR + SUBJECT + INFINITIVE

In Jacob Zeitlin's very valuable dissertation "The Accusative with Infinitive and some kindred constructions in English" (New York 1908) I find on p. 138 the following note:

There is no justification for an assertion like the following: "Such sentences as 'I don't know what is worse than *for such wicked strumpets to lay* their sins at honest men's doors' (Fielding) would be sought in vain before the eighteenth century, though the way was paved for them in Shakespearian sentences like 'For us to levy power Proportionate to th'enemy is all impossible'". Jespersen, Growth and Str., § 211.

Now I venture to maintain that there is every justification for my assertion until some one brings forward an earlier example of the same construction. What has happened is this. Owing to the extreme brevity of expression to which I found myself constrained in the very short chapter I could devote to Grammar in my book, I in this particular instance contented myself with giving an example instead of describing the phenomenon. Zeitlin now adduces against me a good many quotations from the fourteenth and following centuries without seeing that I did not speak of "inorganic *for*" in general — by the way, a very bad designation — but of one particular late development of that phenomenon, namely the use after *than*. But his remark gives me an opportunity of sketching the development of that phenomenon as I have viewed it for some years — as a matter of fact, before Stoffel treated the subject in his well-known *Studies in English*, 1894, p. 49 ff.



The first stage is the natural one, in which *for* is found after an adjective, etc., and then the infinitive follows in the ordinary course without being really closely connected with the *for*-phrase. Thus in the Author. V. 1 Cor. vii. 1 "it is good for a man not to touch a woman". What is good for a man? Not to touch a woman. Most of the early examples given by Zeitlin may be analyzed in this way, and similarly nearly all the examples found in the NED. (*for* 18).

But afterwards an interesting shifting (metanalysis) takes place. "It is good for a man | not to touch a woman" gradually and insensibly comes to be apprehended "It ist good | for a man not to touch a woman". Here the question to be answered is, What is good? And the answer is, For a man not to touch a woman. What at first was a prepositional complement of the adjective, thus became virtually the subject of the infinitive. The alteration in the linguistic feeling may be compared to the change that has made *that* and German *dass* into a conjunction: "I know that | (viz.) it is true" and "Ich weiss das | es wahr ist" became "I know | that it is true" and "Ich weiss | dass es wahr ist"; a phonetic parallel is *an ekename* > a *nickname*. I propose the name "metanalysis" as a convenient term for such "shiftings of boundaries" (Grenzenverschiebungen).

Now the beginnings of syntactic shiftings are not always discoverable, because a necessary condition of the transition must always be the existence of numerous examples in which both explanations are equally admissible or nearly so. Such examples may be found even a long time after examples showing that the transition has been accomplished in other connections. I shall give a few quotations which thus admit of two interpretations lying close to one another.

Fiedling T. J. I. 303 It is no slight matter for a man of my character to be thus injuriously treated *ibid.* 285 It is common for the combatants to express good-will for each other | Carlyle II 52 It has ever been held the highest wisdom for a man not merely to submit to Necessity | Austen P & P there was not time for her even to mention his name.

To some extent, the second interpretation may be shown by means of a comma, as in Meredith, Eg. 395 Is it just, for me to be taken up and cast down at your will? But on

the whole, we must require some clearer outward sign than punctuation to indicate the accomplishment of a linguistic shifting; and in the matter we are here examining we have such an indubitable outward manifestation in word-order.

The second stage, then, is reached when it becomes possible to place *for* + the noun or pronoun at the head of the sentence. If I am not mistaken, this stage was not reached till about 1600, my earliest examples being from Shakespeare and Bacon. It is true that Zeitlin has an earlier quotation, from *Utopia*, ed. Lupton, p. 227 "But for the husbände to put away his wyfe for no faulte, but for that some myshappe is fallen to her bodye, thys by no meanes they will suffre". But in Arber's reprint, p. 124, the same passage shows the earlier construction without *for*: "Howbeit the husbände to put away his wife", etc.

Shakespearian instances, besides those given by Zeitlin, are R 2 II. 2. 123 For vs to leuy power Proportionate to th'enemy, is all impossible | Cymb III. 5. 5 for our selfe To shew lesse soueraignty then they, must needs Appeare vn-kinglike | Cor II. 2. 13 for Coriolanus neyther to care whether they loue, or hate him, manifests the true knowledge he ha's in their disposition | *ibid.* II. 2. 34 and II. 3. 10. Further Milt. PL VIII 250 for a man to tell how human life began Is hard. I add one of my most recent quotations, Hardy *Tess*: He saw that for him to be unwise was not, in her mind, within the region of the possible.

As a third stage I consider the use after *than*, *as* and *but*. This may seem a simple consequence of stage II, but as a matter of fact it looks as if it took a century to pass from the first instance of II to III, my oldest quotations being here from the beginning of the eighteenth century. Stoffel has one from Swift (*Studies in Engl.* p. 66): The Lilliputians think nothing can be more unjust than for people, in subservience to their own appetites, to bring children into the world. Another is from *Tub* 121: Nothing was more frequent than for a bailiff to seize Jack. . . or, at other times, for one of Peter's friends to accost Jack. Examples from Fielding: TJ II. 47 nothing can be more common than for the finest gentlemen to perform this ceremony | *Works* III. 483 What can be more ridiculous than for gentlemen to quarrel about hats. From the

19th century: Coleridge Biogr. 24 nothing is more common than for the many to mistake the liveliness of his nature | Frank Fairl. I. 214 nothing can be more correct than for you to call and make the proper inquiries | Black Princ. 155 that would please you better than for you to go always and live in England.

Corresponding examples with *as* and *but*: Austen Emma 62 Nothing so easy as for a young lady to raise her expectations too high | Austen Mansf. 71 There was nothing to be done but for Mrs. G. to alight and the others to take their places

Besides word-order, we have another criterion of the accomplished shifting in the use of *for* + infinitive after a *to* serving to indicate what was the original meaning of the *for*-phrase, as in Austen P & P 80 it might seem disrespectful *to* his memory for me to be on good terms with [his enemy] | Bridges Eros 170 the use of any inconventionality in spelling has of late years been too great a disadvantage *to* authors for them to venture it | Newsp. It is, indeed, of great use *to* healthy women for them to cycle<sup>1</sup>.

Further we may note that the *for*-construction is used as an object after verbs, adjectives, and nouns which do not otherwise take *for*<sup>2</sup>. My only example before the eighteenth century is from Pepys 30 10 1662 So we consulted for me to go first to Sir H. B. — After verbs: Thackeray VF 82 What I like best, is for a nobleman to marry a miller's daughter. . . And what I like next best, is, for a poor fellow to run away with a rich girl | Eliot SM 38 you'd like better for us both to stay at home together | Philips Looking Gl. 293 he had fixed for the marriage to take place at eleven | Pinero Benef. 235 I hardly know in what language you would choose for me to reply. — After an adjective: Dickens Christm. 58 Nor am I afraid for them to see it | Eliot Mill I. 4 I should be sorry for him to be a raskill | *ibid.* II. 220 shouldn't you be glad

1 Very often, the context shows the impossibility of the original analysis, as in Ehot Bede 266 What time will it be convenient for me to see you to-morrow, sir? [=when will my coming be convenient *to you*].

2 This is different from the use in "he longs for this to be over", "he wishes for her to come", as *long* and *wish* are habitually constructed with *for* + a noun.

# FOR+SUBJECT+INFINITIVE

for me to have the same sort of happiness? | Austen P & P 330 he was anxious for his sister and herself to get acquainted. — After a noun: Fielding TJ I 268 the good man gave immediate orders for all his family to be summoned round him Dickens Nickleby 289 I gave permission for the infant to go | Eliot Bede 244 a struggle between the desire for him to notice her, and the dread lest she should betray the desire to others | Shaw Plays II. 26 the decree for our army to demobilize was issued yesterday | Hardy Ironies 188 the request for her to come.

I shall not here mention the constructions after *too*, *enough* and the like, which, though more obvious, do not seem to occur very early (Fielding TJ I. 68 the tempest was too high for her to be heard | Austen P & P 14 Mr. D. had been sitting near enough for her to overhear a conversation between him and Mr. B. | Fielding TJ IV. 23 she is now coming to town, in order for me to make my addresses to her), but I shall finally mention that it is possible now to use *there* as a sham subject after *for* (World's Work 1907 432 at a period when corn is in bloom it is desirable for there to be what meteorologists denominate light airs) and that we may have two *for*-constructions in different senses in the same sentence: Shaw Plays I. 197 The only way for a woman to provide for herself decently is for her to be good to some man that can afford to be good to her | Phillpotts Mother 109 'Tis quite enough for me to offer advice, for him to scorn it.

From my own mother-tongue I have noted a few quotations that may be taken as the first germs of a similar development to that found in English: Holberg Jeppe II. 3 det var mod alle regler for døde folk at æde og drikke | the same, Justesens Bet. a 4 I gamle dage var det mod landets mode for mandfolk at gaa med silke-klæder.

- *Festschrift Wilhelm Viëtor*, 1910.



## A FEW BACK-FORMATIONS

In 1894 I wrote an article "Om subtraktions-dannelser, særligt på dansk og engelsk" in "Festskrift til Vilhelm Thomsen." I used the word subtraction to denote the phenomenon that a new word or form was equal to an older form *minus* something which had been (mistakenly) apprehended as an inflectional or derivational element and had therefore been discarded, thus the same phenomenon which is now generally called *back-formation* with a happy term invented by Dr. (later Sir James) Murray. In later books I have treated the phenomenon as a subdivision of the more general term "metanalysis", by which I mean that words or word-groups are by a new generation analyzed differently from the analysis of a former age (see *Mod. Engl. Gr.* II, p. 141, *Language*, p. 173). Metanalysis may lead to addition (lengthening) as well as to subtraction (shortening) and to changes which are neither (e. g. semantic changes).

Here I shall not take up again all the various kinds of back-formation dealt with in my old paper, but only collect some examples of verbs formed in this way chiefly from substantives. In a great many cases these examples are, as might be expected, mentioned in NED and its Supplement; in that case I give the date of the earliest quotation there given; but some of my words are not to be found there.

As is well known, English cannot originally form verbal compounds the first element of which is the object (or an adverbial qualification) of the second part. Where we do find such verbs, they generally have taken their origin in the circuitous way through a verbal substantive (action-noun or agent-noun). This is seen in the following instances<sup>1</sup>:

<sup>1</sup> Abbreviations of book-titles as in MEG.

# A FEW BACK-FORMATIONS

- backbite*, NED 1300 — from *backbiter*, *backbiting*.
- book-hunt*, NED Suppl. 1880 — from *book-hunter*, *-ting*.
- book-keep*, not NED. Shaw C 20 I could book-keep by double entry.
- boot-lick*, NED Suppl. 1845. also Payne A1 'to seek to ingratiate oneself'.
- caretake*, NED Suppl. 1893. Also Jenkins B 157 women . . . to caretake for him.
- cony-catch*, NED 1592, frequent in Elizabethans.
- eavesdrop*, NED 1606, from *eavesdropper*, *-ping*; but possibly a simple formation from the sb. *eavesdrop(s)*. Galsw SS 260 in any case I don't expect to be eavesdropped
- Macdonnell E 252 It was surely better to eavesdrop a passionate proposal of marriage than to interrupt it.
- fortune-hunt*, not NED: Byron L 82 I cannot fortune-hunt.
- globe-trot*, NED Suppl. 1883, also Bookman Dec. 1908. 124 she globe-trotted.
- handshake*, NED Suppl. 1898. also Lewis EG 314 as he handshook his way from store to store.
- hay-make*, not NED. Macdonell E 270 no one hay-makes in May.
- horror-strike*, NED 1811. Seeley Exp 136 the horror-striking stories. — From *horror-stricken*, *-struck*.
- housebreak*, NED 1820 (Shelley).
- house-hunt*, NED 1888. Also Wells N 276 we'll have to house hunt; cf. *book-hunt*.
- housekeep*, NED 1842, also NP '25 with no palaces to house-keep for | Kipl L 240 you'd better come and housekeep for me | Merriman V 114 to housekeep generally . . . I could never housekeep . . . a lady who housekeeps for all humanity | Shaw IW 336 I have to be housekept-for, nursed, doctored . . .
- hut-keep*, Morris Austr. = to act as a hut-keeper.
- love-make*, cannot perhaps be inferred from Walpole DW 245 A man 'ud have a stiff time love-makin' with her (not quite the same thing as *making love to her*, as it implies mutuality).
- merrymake*, NED 1714. G. du Maurier Trilby 142 you merry-make together.

## A FEW BACK-FORMATIONS

*mixbathe*, not NED. NP 1906 the girl who marries is the girl who does not smoke, does not play hockey or bridge, and particularly does not mix-bathe.

*rough-ride*, NED 1890.

*sheepsteal*, NED 1820 (Shelley).

*sight-read*, NED Suppl 1903.

*sight-see*, NED 1835, 1843; also Elizabeth F 228 She had come to sight-see.

*slave-drive*, not NED. Shaw J 112 employing him to slave-drive your laborers.

*sleep-walk*, not NED. NP 1923 The heroine sleep-walks.

*soothsay*, NED 1606.

*spring-clean*, NED Suppl 1930. Earlier ex. NP 1908 He was helping his wife to "spring clean".

*strap-hang*, NED Suppl 1917; also Bennett H 78 you strap-hang on the Subterranean.

*sunburn*, NED 1530 — chiefly from *sunburnt*.

*thought-read*, NED 1898; also in Wells L 164 Why don't they thought-read each other? | ib same page: Let them thought-read their daughters.

*tongue-tie*, NED 1555, from *-tied*.

*type-write*, NED 1887; also Shaw 2. 88 and 113 | Wells L 169 I could typewrite if I had a machine.

*word-paint*, not NED. NP 1894 to word-paint the wreathing of the mist and every caprice and humour of the sky.

The following back-formed verbs differ from those mentioned above through not being compounds:

*bant*, NED 1865, from the personal name Banting, the inventor of a cure for corpulence.

*burgle*, NED 1872, from *burglar*.

*buttle*, NED Suppl 1918. Also Wallace, Green Archer 66 I've never buttled | ib 261 when you were buttling | Locke FS 261 going through dinner . . . all alone under the fishy eye of that butling image of a Jenkins. From *butler*.

*hawk*, NED 1542. From *hawker*.

*lech*, not NED Masfield E 68 leched (pple). From *lecher*.

*scavenge*, NED 1547. Thus Wells Am 37 Broadway was scavenged by roving herds of . . . pigs. From *scavenger*.

*vive*, not NED. Galsw Sw 218 they posed as viveurs . . . but they didn't vive; they thought too much about how to.



Here we must place the common verb *beg*, if, as is highly probable, it is a back-formation from OFr *begard* or (and) *beg(h)in*, the latter apprehended as a participle. The derivation from OE *bedecian* does not seem at all probable.

In a few cases the adverbial ending *-ling* has been apprehended as containing the participial ending *-ing* with the result that we get a verb ending in *-le* resembling the numerous verbs in *-le* in which the ending has not originated in this way:

*darkle*, NED 1819, from *darkling*.

*grovel*, NED 1593, from *grovel(l)ing*.

*sidle*, NED 1697, from *sidling*.

Next we have a certain number of words in which a Latin or French ending has been more or less irregularly subtracted. A great many of them are, or were originally, Americanisms.

*ambish*, in T. Baron Russel's *Current Americanisms*; from *ambition*.

*demarcate*, NED 1816, from *demarcation*.

*electrocute*, NED Suppl 1889. From *electrocution*, though NED derives the sb from the verb.

*elocute*, not NED; American quotations (besides Payne's Word-list from Alabama) Lewis MS 47 Ella is our shark at elocuting | ib 121 you can elocute just as good as Ella. From *elocation*.

*enthuse*, NED 1869, Suppl 1859. — Housman J enthuse them, Keir Hardie Serfd. 86 enthused. From *enthusiasm*.

*excuse*, NED 1748. From *excursion*. Brynildsen's Dictionary has *excursh* as Amr, which I have found nowhere else.

*extradite*, NED 1864. From *extradition* (paper-word).

*introspect*, NED 1683. Possibly direct from Latin, instead of from *introspection*.

*intuite*, NED 1840. — Times Lit. Suppl. 31. 5. '28 Trollope knew (or "intuited") very well the ecclesiastical types he chose to represent. From *intuitzion*.

*irrupt*, NED 1855. and Farmer's *Americanisms*. From *irruption*.

*luminesce*, NED 1896. From *luminescent*.

*mote*, NED 1890. NP Adv. 1906 Everything for the man who motes. From *motor*.

## A FEW BACK-FORMATIONS

*orate*, (NED 1600 from Lat.), in modern use from *oration*,  
e. g. Kipling P 176 The little green man orated like  
Cicero | London F 109 He orated grandly.

*poetast*, not NED. Shaw C 290 I have poetasted The Ad-  
mirable Bashville | NP 1925 this poetasting of mine.  
From *poetaster*.

*preempt*, NED chiefly U. S. 1857. — Lewis B 266 Babbitt  
had discreetly pre-empted a place beside Louetta. From  
*preemption*.

*proliferate*, NED 1873. — Wells H 57 she was proliferating  
compliments. From *proliferation*.

*reluct*, NED 1648, "in later use prob. a back-formation from  
-ance." Gissing R 89 reluct at.

*reminisce*. NED 1829, "still somewhat colloquial or jocular." —  
Stephen L 483 I have been induced to do a bit of  
'reminiscing' for the Atlantic Monthly | ib 484 I do not  
reminisce. From *reminiscence*.

*retice*, not NED. Stephen L 238 They told him to be reticent,  
and yet, when he 'reticed' (or whatever the word should  
be) they . . . From *reticent*, -ence.

(*sculp*, e. g. Kipl MOP 216; from *sculptor*, or direct from Lat.)  
(\**suase*, presupposed by) Kipl S. 169 We're strictly moral  
suasers. Not NED. From *suasion*; cf. Kipl ib 168 moral  
suasion.

*televise*, NED Suppl 1927. Cf. Times Lit. Suppl 24. 8. 1933  
W. Taynton, the office boy . . . was the first person in  
the world to be televised . . . the person to be televised  
had to sit in a concentrated light. From *television*.

*vivisect*, NED 1864. Cf. Meredith TC the vivisected youth  
Housman J 93 she does vivisect me | Shaw D \*64 the  
doctor vivisects. From *vivisection*, -tor.

I may end by translating what I said in 1894 about  
English verbs seemingly taken from Latin perfect  
participles. "The explanation is certainly the following.  
The Lat. form, *create*, *corrupt*, *select*, *erect*, etc., was first  
taken over as a pple. As now *t* in several native participles  
was felt as shortened from -*ted* (*cut*, *shut*, *thrust* and others,  
in which the inf. = pple) and were to some extent used  
alongside of -*ted*: *casted* by the side of *cast*, *knitted* = *knit*,  
*heat* (Sh John IV. 1. 61) = *heated*, forms like *created* and

*corrupted* came to be used as participles by the side of *creat*, *create*, and *corrupt*; through subtraction the infinitives *create* and *corrupt* were then formed, and in the same way a whole host of others: *abbreviate*, *abdicate*, *appreciate*, *approximate*, *alleviate*, *amputate*, *assimilate*, etc., *abstract*, *addict*, *affect*, *attract*, etc. But another circumstance was no doubt also instrumental in this transference of Lat. participles, namely the fact that the Lat. agent nouns were formed from the pple; *-or* in Engl. fell together with *-er*, the ending by means of which the corresponding derivatives were formed from native verbs. When, therefore, *corruptor*, *editor*, etc., were taken over, it was also possible here to arrive at an Engl. inf. *corrupt*, *edit* by subtracting the ending."

All these verbs have recently been treated in a very able manner by Ole Reuter ("On the Development of English Verbs from Latin and French Past Participles", Helsingfors 1934); on p. 136 he says that "e. g. substantives *abduction*, *aberration*, *depredation*, *digression*, *investigation*, *progress* may have helped to introduce the verbs *abduct*, *aberrate*, *depredate*, *digress*, *investigate*, *progress*. In some cases verbs have even been formed by back-formation from the substantives, e. g. *acceptilate* from *acceptilation*, *demarcate* from *demarcation*, *legislate* from *legislation*." It will be seen that I ascribe to back-formation a greater influence than does Reuter.

Helsingør (Elsinore), November 1934.

— *Englische Studien*, No. 70, 1935.

## PUNNING OR ALLUSIVE PHRASES IN ENGLISH

In the popular speech of all nations are found instances of a peculiar class of round-about expressions, in which the speaker avoids the regular word, but hints at it in a covert way by using some other word, generally a proper name, which bears a resemblance to it or is derived from it, really or seemingly. The proper name used may be that of a place or of a person; it may be a name of real existence or one made only for the sake of the punning allusion. Thus in Danish to express that a person after receiving a hearty welcome at one place was cold-shouldered by somebody else the people will say: "han kom fra *Hjerting* til *Kolding*", *Hjerting* and *Kolding* being two towns in Jutland the names of which resemble the words *hjerte* (heart) and *kold* (cold). A swell (Dan. *flot*) is often called *en flottenheimer* as if from some imaginary German place called Flottenheim; "der er *Tomas* i pungen" means that the purse is empty (*tom*), etc. A German to avoid the word "*er ist borniert*" will say "*Borneo* ist sein vaterland"; instead of *kotzen* he will say "*Kotzebue's werke studieren*", etc. According to Mérimée (Colomba) in Corsica "se vouer à sainte *Nega*, c'est nier tout de parti pris" (*negare*), and the same idea is expressed in French by "prendre le chemin de *Niort*". These examples<sup>1</sup> will be sufficient to show the reader the nature of the following collection, which makes no pretensions either to completeness or to scientific value.

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<sup>1</sup> Further examples will be found in Wackernagel, *Die deutschen appellationenamen*, Kleinere Schriften III 59 ff., Tobler, *Verblumter ausdrück und wortspiel in altfranz. rede*, i Verm. Beitr. II 192 ff., Kr. Nyrop, *Forblommede Ord*, i Tskr. f. filologi n. r. VII 119 ff

Nord tidsskr i filol 3die række. IX

## PUNNING OR ALLUSIVE PHRASES IN ENGLISH

I have simply arranged alphabetically what I have found by chance reading or by turning over the leaves of not a few dictionaries, the only thing really original being perhaps the explanation of a passage in *King Lear*, s. v. *jakes*. I have made extensive use of the "Collection of local proverbs and popular superstitions" found at the end of F. Grose's *Provincial Glossary* (2d ed. 1790), quoted in the list as G., while Grose, *Vulg.*, means the same author's *Classical Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue* (2d ed. 1788, the edition of 1823 being also consulted). I have made no efforts to ascertain which of the expressions are still current and which are obsolete.

*ass*: "He has gone over *Assfordy-bridge* backwards Spoken of one that is past learning". (G.) *Assfordy* in Leicestershire.

*bally* (vulgar = 'bloody')": "Go to *Ballyhack* (and buy buttermilk)", explained by Muret as meaning "geh zum henker" (go to the devil): is there a place called *Ballyhack*?

*bark*: "He is a representative of *Barkshire* [*Berkshire*]. A vulgar joke on any one afflicted with a cough, which is here termed barking". (G.) "A member or candidate for *Barkshire*". (Grose, *Vulg.*)

*barley*: John *Barleycorn* as a personification of ale "Inspiring bold John Barleycorn! What dangers thou canst make us scorn!" (Burns, *Tam o'Shanter*.)

*bed*: "I'm for *Bedfordshire*", i. e. I want to go to bed. Swift, *Polite Conversation* ed. Saintsbury p. 188 (cf. below *nod*). The New Engl. Dict. (NED) has a quotation from Cotton (1665): Each one departs to *Bedfordshire*, And Pillows all securely snort on. — Also expanded: "to go down Sheet-Lane into *Bedfordshire*". The Germans say: "ich gehe nach *Bethlehem*" or "nach *Bettingen*", cf. *bett* 'bed'; *Bettingen* is a village near Basle. Cf. Danish *Ferholm*, *Ferup*, *Slumstrup*, *Sorstrup*, see Nyrop; also *Hvils-høj*, *Hvilsor*, *Hvilsted* in Feilberg, *Ordb. oc. jyske almuesmål*.

*bed*: "*Bedicorth* beggars". (Grose gives it under *Leicestershire* and adds, "Probably some poor hamlet". Perhaps there is some allusion to "worth their beds"?)

*beggar*: "This is the way to *Beggar's-bush*. It is spoken of such who use dissolute and improvident courses, which tend to poverty; *Beggar's-bush* being a well-known tree, on the left hand of the London-road from Huntingdon to Caxton. This punning adage is said to be of royal origin, made and applied by King

## PUNNING OR ALLUSIVE PHRASES IN ENGLISH

James I. to Sir Francis Bacon, he having over generously rewarded a poor man for a trifling present". (G.)

*birch*: "to send a person to *Birching-lane*", i. e. to whip him. *Birching-lane* or *Birchin-lane*, Cornhill, London. Nares quotes Ascham speaking of "a common proverb of *Birching-lane*". Schlem. p. 69.

*buck*: "An old man who weds a buxom young maiden, biddeth fair to become a freeman of *Buckingham*. In all likelihood the fabricator of this proverb, by a freeman of *Buckingham*, meant a cuckold". (G.)

*cane*: "To lay cane [*Cain*] upon Abel; to beat any one with a cane or stick". Grose, *Vulg.*

*cheap*: "He got it by way of *Cheapside*. A punning mode of expressing that a person has obtained any thing for less than its price or value" (G.) Also in Muret's *Worterbuch* (come at a thing by way of Ch.)

(Clapham, see Grose *Vulg.*)

*cornu*: "He doth sail into *Cornwall* without a bark" i. e. his wife is unfaithful to him. Given by Grose as an Italian proverb "the whole jest, if there be any, lying in the similitude of the words *Cornwall* and *cornua*, horns". — Found in French and Italian, see Tobler, *l. c.* 197.

*counter*: In Falstaff's speech (*Merry Wives* III. 3. 85) "Thou mightst as well say, I loue to walke by the *Counter-gate*, which is as hatefull to me as the reeke of a *Lime-kill*" the allusion is to "the entrance to one of the *Counter Prisons* in London"; but perhaps the meaning is only "to act *counter* to you".

*crabbed*: to be in *Crabstreet*. Quotation from 1812 in NED.

*crooked*: He buys his boots in *Crooked Lane*, and his Stockings in *Bandy-legged Walk* . . . jeering sayings of men with crooked legs. Grose, *Vulg.*

*cuckold*: "He that marries you will go to sea in a hen-pecked frigate, and mayhap come to anchor at *Cuckold's-point*". (Congreve, *Love f. Love* IV. 3; *Mermaid* ed. p. 277); cf. NED: *Cuckold's haven*, *point*, a point on the Thames, below Greenwich; formerly used allusively; see quotations *ibid.* 1606 *Day* (*haven*), 1757 (*point*), 1537 (*cuckoldshire*), perhaps also 1500 and 1668 (*cuckold's row*).

*cumber*: "live in *Cumberland*", i. e. in a cumbrous state, see below, *shrew*.

## PUNNING OR ALLUSIVE PHRASES IN ENGLISH

*cunning*: "*Cunningham*. A punning appellation for a simple fellow". Grose, Vulg.

*diss*: "Diss in Norfolk was formerly so little frequented by travellers, that it became a proverb to express indifference respecting trivial matters, "He knows nothing about *Diss*". (Nares). Brynildsen (*Engelsk-da.-no. ordb.*) is probably right in finding here a pun, *diss* being a curtailed form of *disputation* or *dissertation*.

*dull*: "live in Dull-Street", i. e. in an uninteresting part of the town (Muret, Brynildsen).

*duress?*: "You are a man of *Duresley*. Used to one who has broken his promise". (G., who does not explain it). Duresley in Gloucestershire.

*fleet?*: "Please your honour, liberty and Fleet-street for ever!" (Goldsmith, *She Stoops IV*; Globe ed. p. 666).

*foot*: travel by *Mr. Foot's* horse. Cf. below, *shanks*.

*gaunt*: In Shakespeare's *H4A II. 2. 69* Prince Hal says, "What, a Coward, Sir John *Paunch*," alluding to Falstaff's fat paunch (cf. *II. 4. 159*), and Sir John wittily rejoins, "Indeed I am not *John of Gaunt* your Grandfather".

*green*: send a horse to *Dr. Green*, turn it out to grass.

*grumble* the *Grumbletonians* used to be a nickname for the landed opposition in the reign of William III, see Macaulay, *Hist. of Engl. VII 111* (Tauchn), as it from a town called Grumbleton (or from a man of that name) The word is explained by Grose, Vulg. "A discontented person; one who is always railing at the times, or ministry".

*gutter*, Lat. *guttur?*. "All goeth down *Gutter-lane*. That is, the throat. This proverb is applicable to those who spend all their substance in eating and drinking". (G.) *Gutter-lane* off Cheapside in London, according to Grose originally *Guthurun-lane*, from a person who once owned it.

*hammer*. "He has been at *Hammersmith*", i. e. beaten, thrashed. Hammersmith, a well-known suburb of London.

*hastie*, *hasting* (a kind of early pea). "He is none of the *Hastings* Said of a dull, sluggish messenger". (G.) Cf. *NED* *hasting* with quotations from J. Heywood 1546, Fuller 1661 and *Dict. of Cant* 1700. Cf. German: er ist aus Eilenburg.

*hog* "You were borne at *Hog's Norton*" (G.) H. N. or Hogh Norton, a village in Leicestershire.

## PUNNING OR ALLUSIVE PHRASES IN ENGLISH

*hop*: "Mr. *Hopkins*; a ludicrous address to a lame or limping man, being a pun on the word *hop*". Grose, *Vulg*

*humble*: to eat *humble-pie* means "to be very submissive; to apologize humbly; to submit to humiliation" (N. E. D.) Thus Uriah Heep says (Dickens, *Dav. Copperf.* p. 535, McMillan's ed.) "I got to know what umbleness did, and I took to it. I ate umble pie with an appetite". But *umble pie* is a real dish, made of the *umbles* (or *numbles*), i. e. the inwards of a deer (Ofrench *nombles*, from Lat. *lumbulos*). — The *h* of *humble* was generally mute till about the middle of the nineteenth century.

*jakes*: instead of this old word, meaning a privy and occurring in *King Lear* II. 2. 72 (F: daube the wall of a Iakes, Q: daube the walles of a iagues,) the name of the Greek hero *Ajax* was sometimes used. *Ajax* was pronounced with long *a* in the last syllable; Sir John Harrington (1596) says that it agrees fully in pronunciation with *age akes*, and Ben Jonson rhymes *Ajax*: *sakes* (quoted by Furness, *Var. ed. Lear* p. 128). In *Love's Lab. L.* V. 2. 581 we have a quibble "your Lion that holds his Pollax sitting on a close stoole, will be given to Aiax", and Cotgrave (1611) expressly explains the French *Retraict* by "an Aiax, Priuie, house of Office" (NED.) But commentators have not seen that the same allusion is necessary to understand *King Lear* II. 2. 132, where Kent says (Folio spelling) "None of these Rogues, and Cowards But Aiax is there Foole". Neither Malone's explanation, "These rogues and fools talk in such a boasting strain that, if we were to credit their account of themselves, Ajax would appear a fool as compared with them", nor Verity's, "These clever rogues never fail to make a dupe of Ajax = a type of the slow-witted warrior, as in *Troilus and Cressida*, where he is contrasted with the clever rogue Thersites" — will account for the sudden outburst of Cornwall's anger, "Fetch forth the Stocks. You stubborne ancient Knaue, you reuerent Bragart, Wee'll teach you", Cornwall having been up to this point calm and impartial. But if Kent in applying the name of Ajax to Cornwall alludes to *a jakes*, we can easily understand Cornwall's rage. This explanation is supported by the spelling of the quarto *A'iax*, especially if we remember that the first quarto was probably brought about by some stenographer taking notes during a performance: he would hear Ajax as two words, a -|- iax, as his spelling seems to indicate.

*liberty*: "Pray be under no constraint in this house. This



## PUNNING OR ALLUSIVE PHRASES IN ENGLISH

is Liberty-hall, gentlemen. You may do just as you please here". (Goldsmith, *She Stoops II*, Globe ed. p. 652) Lat. *atrium libertatis*?

*lips*?: In Shakespeare's *King Lear* II. 2. 9 Kent says: "If I had thee in *Lipsbury* Pintold, I would make thee care for me". No really satisfactory explanation of this obscure passage has been given, but if Nares is right in thinking that a pun on 'lips' is intended, and that the phrase denotes 'the teeth', the expression is correctly included in my list.

*lock*: "Put up your pipes, and go to *Lockington* wake" (G.). Lockington in Leicestershire, upon the confines of Derby and Nottingham shires. Grose says, "Probably this was a saying to a troublesome fellow, desiring him to take himself off to a great distance". More probably there is an allusion to *lock* (prison; or 'lock up' = 'shut up').

*long*: "It is coming by *Tom Long*, the carrier; said of any thing that has been long expected." Grose, *Vulg.* 1738.

*loth*: "Though such for woe, by *Lothbury* go, For being spide about Cheapside" (Tusser, quoted by Nares, who says that it seems to be put in a proverbial sense to express unwillingness, being loth) *Lothbury* is a street in the City of London.

*marrow-bone* (marrowbone stage or coach, i. e. walking): go by the *Marylebone* stage, i. e. walk (Muret). Marylebone, parish in London Cf. also "to bring any one down on his marrow bones; to make him beg pardon on his knees" (Grose, *Vulg.*; *Slang Dict.*)

*may-be* "May be there is, Colonel. — Ay; but *May-bees* don't fly now, Miss". Swift, *Polite Conversation* 67.

*need*: "You are in the highway to *Needham*. That is, you are in the high road to poverty". (G.) *Needham* is a market-town in Suffolk Nares quotes from Tusser "Soon less line host at *Needham's* shore, To crave the beggar's boone".

*Netherlands* see Shakespeare. *Errors* III. 2. 142; Beaumont & Fletcher, *Mermaid* ed. l. 290. Low countries, Shakesp. *H4B* II. 2. 25.

*nod*: "I'm going to the land of *Nod*. — Faith, I'm for Bedfordshire" Swift, *Polite Conversation* 188. The Land of Nod is mentioned in Genesis 4,16.

*partridge*: "Why aren't you in the stubbles celebrating St. Partridge", Mrs. H. Ward, *Rob Elsmere* III. 278 i. e. shooting

## FUNNING OR ALLUSIVE PHRASES IN ENGLISH

partridges. There seems to be no saint of that name.

(*placebo*, see Davies and Nares)

*queen*: "A man governed by his wife, is said to live in *Queen Street*, or at the sign of the *Queen's Head*". Grose, *Vulg.*

*queer*: "A fair friend of ours has removed to *Queer Street*" (Dickens, *Dombey & Son* 355). "The more it looks like *Queer Street*, the less I ask" (Stevenson, *Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde* 11). Is there a real Street of that name (= German *Queerstrasse*) anywhere?

*rope*: "to marry *Mrs. Roper*" is to enlist in the Royal Marines. (*Slang Dict.*)

*rot his bone*: "He is gone to *Ratisbone*", i. e. he is dead and buried; in Rosing, *Engelsk-dansk ordbog*. 6te udg. 1887. *Ratisbone* is the English name for the German *Regensburg*.

*rug*: "go to *Ruggins's*", i. e. go to bed. Grose, *Vulg.* (1823).

*sally*: "Your sallies are excellent, Horace, but spare us your *Aunt Sallies*" (Meredith, *the Egoist* 387), i. e. old jokes (?).

*scar*: "A *Scarborough* warning. That is. a word and a blow, and the blow first" (G., who quotes the opinion of Fuller that this is an allusion to an event which happened at that place, A. D. 1557, when Thomas Stafford seized on that castle before the townsmen had the least notice of his approach.) But an allusion to the word *scar* seems likely to be felt by everyone using the phrase.

*shank*: "to ride *shank's mare* (or pony)" i. e. to walk, "How will you get there? On Shanks his mare, said Jack, pointing to his bandy legs" (Kingsley, *Westw. Ho.*, quoted by Davies and Flugel.) "On shanks's pony" (Review of Reviews. Aug. 1895 p. 185). As if from a proper name Shanks. Grose (1788) gives "To ride shanks naggy; to travel on foot", as Scotch. Another synonym is given by the same author: "To ride Bayard of ten toes, is to walk on foot Bayard was a horse famous in old romances".

*sheet*: "to go down *Sheet-Lane* into Bedfordshire", i. e. go to bed (Muret, *Wörterbuch*). Cf. *bed*, *nod*.

*shrew*: "He that fetches a wife from *Shrewsbury*, must carry her to Staffordshire, or else he will live in Cumberland" (G.)

*slow*: "Got a Darby on 'im, or I'm a *Slowcome*" (says a jockey, Hall Caine, *The Christian* 377)

*staff*: "carry her to *Staffordshire*", i. e. beat her, see *shrew*.

## PUNNING OR ALLUSIVE PHRASES IN ENGLISH

*turn*: "He must take a house in *Turn-again-lane*, speaking of persons who live in an extravagant manner . . . to whom it will be necessary to turn over a new leaf. This lane is, in old records, called Wind-again-lane going down to Fleet-market [London] . . . having no exit at the end". (G.)

*weep*: "To return by *Weeping Cross*, was a proverbial expression for deeply lamenting an undertaking, and repenting of it" (Nares, who quotes Howell: "He that goes out with often losse, at last comes home by Weeping Crosse" and Lily's Euphuës and his Engl.: "But the time will come when, coming home by Weeping Crosse, thou shalt confesse that it is better to be at home" besides four other passages. Nares found no less than three places so called.) Also in Grose, *Vulg*

*wit*. "He was borne at *Little Wittham*. A punning insinuation that the person spoken of wants understanding" (G.) Little Wittham in Essex and in Lincolnshire

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Finally I reprint the following newspaper cutting which shows that the spirit of Bunyan has not yet died out in England.

On a church door in Whitechurch the following notice was recently posted:

"Missing last Sunday, some families from church.

"Stolen, several hours from the Lord's Day, by a number of people of different ages dressed in their Sunday clothes.

"Strayed, half a score of lambs, believed to have gone in the direction of 'No Sunday School

"Mislaide, a quantity of silver and copper coins on the counter of a public house, the owner being in the state of great excitement.

"Wanted, several young people. When last seen were walking in pairs up *Sabbath Breakers'-lane*, which leads to the city of *No Good*

"Lost, a lad, carefully reared, not long from home, and for a time very promising. Supposed to have gone with one or two older companions to *Prodigal Town, Husk-lane*

"Any person assisting in the recovery of the above shall in no wise lose his reward."

*Sættir af Nordisk Tidsskrift for Filologi, Vol. 9, No. 3, 1900.*

## THE SYSTEM OF GRAMMAR

THE following pages have been occasioned by the elaboration of *The Essentials of English Grammar* (abbreviated EEG), as I found that I owed the reader some explanations and justifications of various things in that book, which could not very well find their place in the preface or in the introductory chapter. It is my hope that this paper will not be found superfluous, even if I have here dealt with some points that I had already treated, or at any rate touched upon, in previous publications, notably *The Philosophy of Grammar* (abbreviated PG) and the four volumes of *Modern English Grammar* (abbreviated MEG). I may plead as an excuse that my points of view have been criticized recently by the late Professor E. A. Sonnenschein, in *The Soul of Grammar* (Cambridge 1927) and by Professor George O. Curme in two reviews of MEG II and III (in *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*), which in spite of the too flattering words about my work by which they are introduced call for some counter-criticism as they reveal an attitude towards essential points of grammar diametrically opposed to my own. In his *Syntax* (Boston 1931)—in many ways a most important contribution to linguistic study—Curme has also followed a system and put forward theories so unlike mine that I have felt induced to discuss some of them here.

In EEG I have tried to give as clear and concise an exposition as possible of the whole subject, including various observations on details which I do not remember ever meeting with in similar works. I have laid especial stress on the choice of good illustrative examples, and have, as a matter of course, drawn largely on those quotations which I had collected for my MEG, though I have not here, as there,

felt it my duty always to give them in exactly the form in which I found them in English and American books: sometimes they have been shortened or slightly modified so as to bring out a grammatical point more clearly. It is not possible in a grammar to do without some examples which are somewhat dull and seem to say nothing apart from the grammatical rule they are selected to illustrate, but it is possible to reduce the number of such examples to a minimum, and fortunately a great many rules can be illustrated by means of sentences which are in themselves interesting and valuable. I may beg the reader to compare my own examples of *same* (EEG 16.9) with the following collection from a recent book (which is in other respects very meritorious): "It's the same book. It isn't the same thing. It's the same sand. It isn't the same stuff. They're the same books. They're not the same names. This is the same (one). These are the same (ones)."

I have also avoided the drawing up of paradigms like those still found in some grammars, e.g. "I love. Thou lovest. He loves. We love. You love. They love", or "I shall go. You will go. He will go. We shall go. You will go. They will go." Such things justify utterances like Herbert Spencer's about "that intensely stupid custom, the teaching of grammar to children", or J. Runciman's "The textbooks mostly used for grammar are sixpennyworths of horror calculated to make a lad loathe his own language" (*Contemporary Review*, 1888, p. 43).

With regard to the question what is to be considered correct or not correct in grammar I must repeat what I have said elsewhere that it is not, of course, my business to decide such questions for Englishmen: the only thing I have had to do is to observe English usage as objectively as I could. But psychological and historical studies often make one realize that much of what is generally considered "bad grammar" is due neither to sheer perversity nor ignorance on the part of the speaker or writer, but is ultimately due to the imperfections of the language as such, i.e. as it has been handed down traditionally from generation to generation (or rather from older to younger children), or else to general tendencies common to all mankind—tendencies which in other cases have led to forms or usages which are recognized by everybody as perfectly normal and unobjectionable.

This is why the profoundest students of languages are often more tolerant than those who judge everything according to rule-of-thumb logic or to the textbooks of grammar that were the fashion in their own school-days.

The arrangement of the whole matter in EEG is different from that in MEG. The reason is chiefly to be sought in the fact that the bigger work has gradually, under the pressure of various circumstances, developed into a series of monographs which do not, or do not yet, form a connected systematic whole. In the smaller book I had therefore to take up the question of the best way of presenting such a complicated matter as the grammatical structure of the English language. An important point was not to dismember the subject too much, not to break it up into many isolated details, but everywhere to treat together such facts as formed naturally connected wholes. In the phonological part, therefore, instead of taking each sound and its history separately, I have divided the matter according to the great comprehensive changes that have affected the sound-system as a whole. In this way—though I have not used the word *phoneme* and the new technical terms introduced by the recent “phonological” school developed especially in Prague—I think that I have done justice to the valuable theories advanced by that school, even more than in MEG and *Lehrbuch der Phonetik*, in which some of its points of view may be found *in nuce*.

In what may be called the central part of the grammar the principle adduced above has led to the discarding of the usual division of grammar into the theory of forms (accidence, morphology), the theory of word-formation, and the theory of sentence and of the use of forms (syntax). Within each of these divisions the common practice is to subdivide according to the parts of speech (word-classes), having one chapter for substantives, another for adjectives, etc. In most grammars such things of prime importance, at any rate for the structure of English, as the use of the unchanged word and of word-order are treated very inadequately, while those things that are common to more than one word-class are torn asunder. Instead of this more or less traditional arrangement I have *divided the subject according to the principal categories* of a really grammatical order, dealing, within each of the chapters thus origin-

ated, with both forms and their use, comprising under "forms" both word-formation and word-order. My impression is that this arrangement serves better than any other to bring out what is really characteristic of the grammatical structure of the language dealt with, but on the other hand it must be admitted that a similar arrangement would not have been possible to the same extent in any of the cognate languages. In Latin, Old English and German, to take only some of the best-known examples, the forms for case and number are so inextricably mixed up in substantives that it would be impossible or impracticable to deal with case and number separately. In the verbs we should be still less able to isolate the forms for person, number, and tense. The extent to which it is possible to treat each of these fundamental categories separately, thus enables us to measure how far the language concerned has advanced towards the ideal state in which the same grammatical sign has always the same meaning or function, and the same notion is always expressed by the same means.

I shall now follow the order of the chapters of EEG: on some of them I have only a few remarks, while on others there is more to say.

**2.** Very little space can be given to the description of sounds and their formation, so that this chapter is perhaps the one which offers the greatest difficulties to the pupil who has had no previous training in phonetics. I have therefore advised him to skip this chapter (as well as 3—6) until he has read the rest of the book, although it must be recognized that without some knowledge of phonetics no real insight into the structure of any language can be profitably gained.

The phonetic script used throughout the book, wherever necessary, is of the simplest kind, but will, I trust, be found adequate for the purpose. In matters of pronunciation I have, as a matter of course, followed that standard which with some relatively unimportant deviations is found in Sweet, Wyld, Jones, Palmer, R. E. Edwards, Ripman, Miss Ward, Fuhrken and other recent English authorities, but I have also paid some attention to American and other divergences. In the syntactical sections, too, I have often men-

tioned points on which there is no complete agreement in the whole of the English-speaking world.

**3-6.** These are the chapters in which it has been thought more necessary than in the rest of the book to deal with the history of the language, though no previous knowledge of the early stages of English is presupposed. Prehistory, which some scholars consider the only part of linguistic history of value, has been totally disregarded—which does not imply a want of interest in this important study on the part of the author. But one book cannot give everything.

Throughout much emphasis has been laid on alternations—differences in sound that have arisen historically and have more or less torn asunder forms which were originally alike and are still to some extent felt as belonging together. Nothing can better than these make a student realize vividly what is the meaning of phonetic change.

**7.** Word-classes. In EEG no attempt is made to define logically what is understood by a substantive, an adjective, etc. The traditional classification—with some small variations, it is true—has shown a persistent vitality through the ages, and in practice there is general agreement between grammarians, whether practical schoolmasters or historical students, as to the class to which each word in any given context should be assigned. But as soon as we begin to ask what is the underlying logical basis of the classification and to define each of the classes, difficulties arise into which it is not necessary to enter in a work of the character of EEG. Some would say that substantives denote things and what are conceived as things, and they would maintain that the difference between say *pride* and *proud*, *admiration* and *admire* is that the former word in each pair is thought of as a thing<sup>1</sup>. But surely an ordinary mind has no such

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<sup>1</sup> "Irgend ein gegenstand hat eine eigenschaft die mir schön erscheint. Sprachlich kann ich diese eigenschaft mit dem adjektivum *schön* ausdrücken; ich kann aber in der sprache die eigenschaft dinghaft umgestalten und von der *schönheit* jenes gegenstandes sprechen. Das ist gerade eine eigentümlichkeit der menschlichen sprache dass sie etwas beliebiges, was in der umwelt gar kein ding, keine eigenschaft, keine tätigkeit usw. ist, in der sprache als ding, als eigenschaft, als tätigkeit hinstel-



feeling when speaking of a woman's pride or of our admiration for the great poets—the definition really amounts to saying that pride and admiration are treated *grammatically* in the same way as names of things like pearls and trees, and the definition thus is nothing but a *circulus vitiosus*.

It may not be amiss to call attention to the fact that in ordinary parlance we extend the use of the word 'thing' so as to include what could not properly be called a 'thing', as in:

I shall speak to him the first thing in the morning. | The only thing left for us was to run away | Auth. Version Gen. 34.7 hee had wrought folly in Israel, in lying with Jacobs daughter; which thing ought not to be done | Carlyle, French Revolution 119. He finds no special notice taken of him at Versailles,—a thing the man of true worth is used to.

When Wells's "First men in the moon" found traces of the activity of the lunar beings they said "they can make things and do things"—meaning in the first instance substantial things in the ordinary sense of the word, but by the second term nothing but "they act in various ways". In these sentences the reader may find some justification of the definition of "action substantives" as comprised under the term of 'things', but what about the following quotations?

Hart, Bellamy Trial 301 I wasn't beautiful or peaceful or gentle or gracious or gay or strong, but I made myself all those things for him | Benson, David Blaize 166 Why didn't you sit on it or something, when he came in? | Walpole, Silver Thorn 161 He simply felt that she had been badly treated—the very last thing she had been.

Here *thing* stands not for any substantive, but for an adjective, a verb or a participle. Cf. also Iago's "For I am nothing, if not critical".

An adjective does not, as is often said (e.g. by Hermann, see above), denote a quality (for that is what a substantive like *beauty* or *pride* or *cleverness* does) but means "having a quality"—and

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len kann. So kann auch ein wort aus der einen in eine andere wortart austreten" (Hermann, Die wortarten, 1928, 6). But the quality of beauty is not transformed into a thing when we use the word *beauty*. And it may be asked when and how is something that is not a quality or an action made into one in the language? Hermann even thinks that all verbs, even *is* and *sleeps* (and *ist gestorben*) are "*tätigkeitswörter*".

that definition does not even fit all adjectives, but only "qualifiers" and alongside of these we have "quantifiers" like *many*, *numerous*, *few*, etc.<sup>1</sup>

A variant of the usual definitions is found in Alan H. Gardiner's recent important work *The Theory of Speech and Language* (Oxford 1932): "The so-called parts of speech are distinctions among words based not upon the nature of the objects to which they refer, but upon the mode of their presentation. Thus the name of anything presented *as* a thing is a 'noun', and the name of anything presented *as* an action or ... *as* a process, is a 'verb'. In the verb *to cage*, reference is made to the thing called a *cage*, but it is not presented as a thing but as an action. In the noun *assassination* reference is made to an action, but it is not presented as an action but as a thing" (p. 10). "An adjective, on this view, is the name of a thing presented to the listener, not as a thing, but as an attribute." (p. 39).

Here I should first take exception to the example *cage*, for the relation between the substantive *cage* and the verb *I cage* = 'I shut up in a cage' is not the same as in other instances of grammatical homophones, like *fight*, *sleep*, *air*, *plant*, etc. When I use the verb *cage* I do not "present" a cage (which is a real thing) as an action, but speak of an action that has some relation to that thing. And if I say that a face is beautiful, I do not present a thing called *beauty* as an attribute to the face. I can see no other meaning in the verb *present* as here used than 'treat grammatically', and then we have the same *petitio principii* as above. But Dr. Gardiner promises further explanations of his view in his second volume.

It seems to me much more correct to say, as I virtually did in PG, that what is denoted by most substantives is characterized by several qualities, not always easy to define, and that an adjective singles out some one quality, which is applicable to a variety of objects. The chief difficulty is with nexus-substantives, which are dealt with adequately in none of the current definitions, and which really form a class apart: *a dependent nexus concentrated into one word*, cf. below under **30**.

Curme defines the verb as "that part of speech by means of

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<sup>1</sup> I am glad to see that the latter expression, which I think I have coined myself, has been adopted by others, Mr. Ogden among them.

which we make an assertion or ask a question". Accordingly "Nonsense!" and "Where?" are verbs!

Verbs are generally in grammatical treatises as well as in dictionaries named in the infinitive, Lat. *amare*, Fr. *aimer*, G. *lieben*, etc., and correspondingly E. *love* or *to love*. I have preferred to give them in the finite form (*I*) *love*, because the finite forms are more characteristic of the real essence of verbs than the infinitive, which in many ways still retains some syntactical features of its substantival origin. With one class of English verbs it is also impossible to give the infinitive because it has no existence: *can*, *may*, *must*, etc. The usual practice is especially faulty when many grammarians, chiefly foreigners, speak of the rules for the use of *to be to*, for this infinitive with *to*: *to be to* (*write*) is practically non-existent. One might just as well give rules for the use of *to shall*. But it is of course perfectly natural and correct to speak of *I am to* (*write*) and give rules for that just as for *I shall* (*write*).

The last class, 'particles', contains adverbs, prepositions, co-ordinating and subordinating conjunctions. I have elsewhere (PG 88) given my reasons for treating these together: the difference between the various functions of one and the same word, e.g., *before* in "I have been here many times before", "many times before my marriage", and "many times before I was married" is not important enough to cause it to be placed in different categories; in one employment it is like an intransitive verb (has no object), in the others it is 'transitive' and has in one case a substantive, in another a clause as its object.

Recently V. Brøndal (*Ordklasserne* 1928, *Morfologi og syntax* 1932) after a learned and most instructive exposition of all earlier classifications has made a very bold attempt at a completely new system, defining word-classes by means of the purely logical notions of *Relator* (R) and *Relatum* (r), *Descriptor* (D) and *Descriptum* (d), which may be combined in various ways (Dr, Dd, rd; Drd, etc.).

His books contain a great many sagacious and penetrating remarks, and his system would seem to deserve very careful consideration, but even if it were right in every detail it could not be adopted in a work of so practical a character as my grammar: it would require

too many long and difficult explanations. As a matter of fact, I think it possible to gain a really valuable insight into the essential structure of the English language without any abstruse logical analysis of what a "word" or what a "substantive", etc., is. The important thing is that the student should recognize a substantive when he finds it, and that can be achieved through showing him a sufficient number of specimens, just as a child learns to know a cat and a dog not through any definition but by seeing a certain number of individuals and hearing the appropriate word applied to them.

In a very short preliminary survey of the most important flexions of these word-classes the term *base* is introduced for that form of the verb which has no 'ending' and which according to circumstances can be used as an infinitive, an imperative, a present indicative and a present subjunctive. Next we go on to the "Derivation" of one word-class from another. The examples given of the various classes comprise in a number of cases the same form given under two or even three different headings. The form taken by itself thus gives no clue to the class under which the word is to be included, but if we see how the word 'behaves' towards other words and how other words behave towards it in various circumstances, we obtain tests by which we can tell whether such a form is a substantive, an adjective, an adverb or a verb: *fight* is a substantive if it can take *a* or *the* before it, and if it adds *s* in the plural, but a verb if it is changed into *fought* when a fight in the past time is thought of, if it adds *s* in the third person, etc. By such tests we see that *love* is a substantive in *his former love for her*, but a verb in *he did love her once*, and the two words are seen to be parallel to *admiration* and *admire* respectively. *American* is sometimes a substantive ('two Americans arrive'), sometimes an adjective ('two American guests'). cp. 'two Spaniards arrive' and 'two Spanish guests'. *Long* belongs to one word-class in 'a long stay', to another in 'he stayed long', and to a third in 'I long to see her', etc., etc.

We have here one of the most characteristic features of the structure of English, the number of 'grammatical homophones', but it would be entirely wrong to describe this as the capacity in English of "using substantives as verbs", etc., a substantive is always used as a substantive, a verb as a verb, etc.

Some German linguistic thinkers see a trait of national psychology in the frequency in English of phrases like *have a look, a shave, a smoke, take care, give a glance, a kick*, etc.: they are taken as “*gegenständliches denken*” or “objective thinking” with its preference for things or objects as more concrete than the more abstract verbs. As the substantives used in these phrases are not names of ‘things’, it seems more natural to see in the predilection of English for expressions of this kind the same purely grammatical trait as in the numerous cases in which English has a small auxiliary in the beginning of the sentence, which embodies the marks of tense, person, and number, and reserves the really significant word (verb) for a later place: *he does (not) write, does he write, will he write, he has written, is he writing*, etc., etc.

In innumerable cases we derive verbs from substantives, substantives from verbs, etc., without any distinctive ending, but this is not the only way, and we are thus naturally led to those cases in which endings and similar means are used (*belief believe, strong strength strengthen, admire admiration, child childish, clever cleverness cleverly*, etc.). It will be seen that I have thus managed to squeeze in a bit—and a most important bit—of the theory of word-formation into this chapter. Other bits follow in other chapters.

**8. Ranks.** *Poor* in “the poor are always with us” is often said to be an adjective used substantively; other grammarians even say that it has become a substantive. *Stone* in *stone wall* is termed a substantive used adjectively or a substantive turned into an adjective. *Above* in *the above remark* is termed an adverb used adjectively or turned into an adjective; *my way* in *he would not look my way* is called an adverbial use of the substantive (with its pronoun). Clauses are divided into substantival clauses (or noun clauses), adjectival clauses (or adjective clauses) and adverbial clauses (or adverb clauses).

All these expressions are misleading because they use terms relating to the classification of words (‘parts of speech’) in speaking of a classification which has some points of similarities with this one but is really based on something fundamentally distinct—moves, as it were, in a different plane—namely the classification according to

the 'rank' of a member of a grammatical combination. While the former classification concerns words only so that it is possible in a dictionary to say what class a word belongs to, the distinction we are now going to deal with, concerns not only single words, but word groups, including clauses, and has no existence except in combinations actually found in connected purposive speech.

We have three grammatical ranks, here designated with Roman numerals:

I Primary (this term is better than 'principal' which I used at first)

II Secondary

III Tertiary.

In "The French are a great nation" *the French* is an adjective primary, in "The Americans are a great nation" *the Americans* is a substantive primary; both *the French* and *the Americans* are thus primaries, but belong to different word-classes as shown by the fact that only *the Americans* has the flexional ending *s*. In the same way these groups can be the object of a verb, as in "I admire the French", "I admire the Americans", or the object of a preposition, as in "with the French", "with the Americans".

Examples of secondaries are: "a *French* actor", "a *Saturday-to-Monday* visit", "a *long* stay".

In some languages, e.g. German and Danish, it is not always easy to distinguish between adjectives that have become substantives and adjectives used as primaries. In English there may be a few doubtful cases, but in general we have indubitable criteria: *a black* and *the black* = 'negro' can stand by itself in the singular (with the definite and indefinite article), which an adjective like *poor* can not; it can form a plural *blacks* and a genitive: *the black's skin*. Curme thinks that I am wrong in denying the name of substantive to *the poor* because it has no *s* in the plural: he calls attention to the fact that some substantives have an unchanged plural. This is true, but all words from other word-classes that are turned into substantives, form their plurals regularly in *s*. And, as remarked, the plural is not the only thing which makes *black* into a substantive, different from adjectives. If language itself keeps two things distinctly apart as in Shakespeare's "Sweets to the sweet" he would be a bad grammarian who would

persist in lumping them together as "adjectives that have become substantives".

Examples of tertiaries are: "he stayed *long*", "he stayed *a week*", "he stayed *from Saturday to Monday*", "he stood there *bat in hand*". (The term 'subjunct', which I used in former publications, is superfluous).

While a finite verb is always a secondary (to the subject, which is primary), participles and infinitives may according to circumstances be any of the three ranks.

The rank division is very important with regard to pronouns: some pronouns are always primaries (e.g. *I, mine, somebody, anything*), others are always secondaries (e.g. *every, my*), others again are used sometimes in one, sometimes in another rank, e.g. *that*: "that is true" (I), "that tune" (II), "he was that angry" (III; vulgar). *None*: "none of his brothers" (I), "of none effect" (II; half archaic), "none the less" (III).

Clause primaries, secondaries and tertiaries are treated below.

From a logical point of view it is true that we have more ranks than the three, as a tertiary may be further determined, as in "an unusually well written article", where the tertiary *well* is determined by *unusually*, which thus might be called a logical quaternary, but as we nowhere find any *grammatical* criteria for such subordination, the three ranks are all that a grammarian needs distinguish.

The distribution into three ranks is found not only in sentences, where the subject and object are always primaries, but also within elements that constitute themselves one of the three ranks: the whole group "a very long time" is a primary in "a very long time passed", a tertiary in "he stayed there a very long time", but in both cases the group consists of the primary *time*, the secondary *long* and the tertiary *very* (*a* is also a secondary).

The theory of ranks as here outlined affords us means of expressing in a precise and natural way what with the usual grammatical terminology presents considerable difficulty, as when *what* is often called a substantival pronoun, which in *what branch* is made into an adjectival pronoun; in *what one* this adjectival pronoun is substantivized by *one*. Or: *top* is a substantive; in *top branch* it has become an adjective or an adjective-equivalent, but in *the top one*

it is again substantivized. Instead it is better to say: *what* is always a pronoun, and *top* is always a substantive: in *what happened?* and *the top fell down* they are primaries, but in *what branch*, *what one*, *the top branch*, *the top one* they are secondaries to the primaries *branch* and *one*.

It is perhaps worth noticing that when we speak in grammar of a word 'governing' another, it is as a rule one belonging to a lower rank that governs one of a higher rank; a verb (II) governs an object (I), a preposition (III) governs an object (I), a conjunction (III) governs a clause (I): the conjunction + the clause may be either I, II or III.

9. Junction and nexus are terms introduced to designate two fundamentally different ways of combining primaries and secondaries. Typical examples are *the running dog*, junction: *running* (II) is adjunct to *dog* (I), and on the other hand *the dog runs*, nexus: *runs* (II) is adnex to *dog*. Other examples of nexus are: I saw (made) *the dog run*, I caused *the dog to run*, *the running of the dog*. In "he painted *the red door*" we have a junction, in "he painted *the door red*" a nexus.

There is more life, more dramatic movement in a nexus than in a junction which is like a picture.

In a junction we have one idea which is linguistically broken in two, as when instead of *a giant* we say *a tall man*, instead of *a stench*, *a disagreeable smell*. In a nexus, on the other hand, two distinct ideas are combined to represent a process—the ways in which this combining is effected is described in chapter 10 (independent nexus) and 29—35 (dependent nexus).

The relation between a primary and an adjunct is in some cases quite simple and logical (a red door, the Pacific Ocean, a criminal action), in others more complicated and subject to idiomatic restrictions (a Pacific Islander, a criminal lawyer).

Combinations akin to, but not exactly identical with, junctions are found in *Mr. Smith*, *Miss Smith*, *Lydia Smith*, *Miss Lydia Smith*, etc. This leads to various kinds of apposition, as in *Sven Hedin*, *the celebrated explorer* or *they were all of them drunk*, *they neither of them looked up*, and this again to 'loose' or 'unattached participles',



which are condemned in most cases, but are considered perfectly legitimate e.g. in "Strictly speaking, he ought to have been punished". A new term is wanted for elements which stand outside the sentence while in it they are represented by a pronoun: "He was a great novelist, that Charles Dickens", "Inferiority complex—what exactly does that mean". In such cases I speak of *extraposition*: thus I say that the infinitive or the clause is in extraposition in "it is difficult to account for this" or "it struck me that he was decidedly paler than usual". Extraposition is extremely frequent in French, e.g. *moi je dis ça; je dis ça, moi: le capitaine où est-il?*

In this chapter as in the preceding one a few new terms have been introduced, but it will be found on closer inspection that they, too, are very useful in describing accurately various grammatical phenomena which otherwise would have to be designated by long and necessarily vague circumlocutions.

**10.** Under *sentence-structure* we naturally deal first with that type of sentence which is by many scholars considered the normal type, by others even the only one deserving the name of sentence, namely the combination of a subject and a predicate, the latter having as its chief constituent part a finite verb. In our terminology this is an independent nexus: the subject is a primary, and the verb a secondary. But there may be two primaries: a subject and an object, or even three, as there may be two objects.

In some words (pronouns) a case-form serves to distinguish the subject from the object, but an even more important way of distinguishing them is word-order, and thus we are naturally led to a consideration of the most important rules for word-order. The usual order is S (subject)—V (verb)—O (object), but in some cases (questions, exclamations, parenthetical insertions, sentences with a preposed negative) there is an opposite tendency to have V before S; the consequence is the compromise with a small auxiliary verb before S and the important verb after S: *v—S—V—O*: Could John see Henry | Did John see H? | Never did I see the like, etc. Other exceptions to the general rule (when, e.g., the object is an interrogative or relative pronoun) have also to be considered here: parts of the important, but too often neglected theory of word-order thus

find a natural place here at the very beginning of the syntactical chapters.

Sometimes the subject is not expressed: Thank you! | Confound it! etc., and even more than the subject may be left out (by "prosiopesis", an expression which however is not used in "Essentials"): (Have you) got a match? (I shall) see you again tomorrow. Very often a sentence consists only of a predicative: Splendid! How annoying! In these cases it is legitimate (though I have preferred not to use these expressions in EEG) to speak of "ellipsis" or "omission", because it is easy to see what is left out ("understood"), but it is not legitimate to speak of such sentences as imperfect or incomplete: the meaning is expressed just as completely and intelligibly as in the most perfectly balanced sentence containing a subject and a finite verb. Nor is the ellipsis-explanation legitimate in a great many cases in which grammarians of the old school are fond of using it: it is a dangerous weapon, which should be used very sparingly indeed.

It can never be applied to *amorphous* sentences, which are frequently called forth by strong emotion and in which it would be perfectly futile to look for something that is left out or understood, or to say what 'part' of a sentence they are: they range from 'inarticulate' sounds like clicks (*Tck! Tut!* and others for which our alphabet is totally inadequate) through *Hm! Hurrah! Yes!* to words and word-groups that can be used as parts of sentences of the first type: Thanks! What? Nonsense! An aeroplane! This way, ladies! Oh, those women! There is surely no reason why such exclamations should not be recognized as complete and perfectly normal sentences.

The terms 'main sentence' and 'main clause' are superfluous. They are often used of what remains when 'dependent clauses' are removed, but that would mean that in a sentence like "What I cannot understand is that John got angry when he heard the way in which they spoke of his father" the 'main sentence' or 'main clause' consists only of the small word *is*! It is much better to use the term *sentence* of the whole and *clause* (not 'dependent clause') of any part of a sentence which contains a dependent nexus and resembles a sentence in its structure (ch. 33 ff.).

**11.** Relation of verb to subject and object. Here again some of the usual definitions do not hold water. The subject cannot be defined by means of such words as active and agent, for they do not cover such cases as "He lost his father in the war" or "he was surprised" or "the garden swarms with bees" (otherwise expressed "bees swarm in the garden"). Nor can the object be defined as the person or thing directly affected by the action, for in "John loves Ann", "John sees the moon" John is more directly affected than Ann or the moon. All this is a direct consequence of the many-sidedness of the relations that are found in human life and have to be expressed in human language.

A logical analysis will in each case bring out one or more things ('things' or 'persons') having relation to the action or state implied in the verb; if there is only one it is the subject, if there are two, the one that stands in the closest relation to the verb is its subject, the other the object; if three, the more or less close relation determines them as being subject, direct and indirect object. An indirect object can better be dispensed with than a direct object, and that than the subject, but the difference is one of degree only. Many ideas expressed by means of a verb are such that they have relation to one primary only, they are permanently intransitive; but most verbs may at any rate occasionally have relation to two (or three) primaries; if the more remote of these is not expressed they are used intransitively (I shall pay; he plays well), otherwise they are used transitively (I shall pay the bill, pay the driver, pay the driver two shillings; he plays golf, or the violin, etc.). Tertiaries stand in a looser relation to the verb than either subject or object (I shall pay the bill the day after tomorrow), but sometimes it is difficult to draw a sharp line between object and tertiary (it costs two shillings).

In "he happened to fall" the notional subject is a nexus "he ... to fall": that is what happened. In such cases I use the term "split subject". In "the path is easy to find" it is not completely satisfactory to say that "the path" is the subject and that the infinitive is used as a subordinate (supine-like) supplement or complement to *easy*: the curious thing is that *the path*, which is formally the subject of the sentence is at the same time as it were the object of *find*: what

is easy is to find the path. Several phenomena of a related character have to be examined though it is not important to invent special terms for them.

Various types of objects have always been more or less recognized by grammarians (result: he built a house; he dreamt a curious dream; instrument: she nodded her head). Though these and the constructions of many verbs with both direct and indirect object are, of course, treated fully in the grammar, they require no remarks in this paper. I shall only mention here that the chapter dealing with objects has been chosen as the best place in which to deal with reflexive and reciprocal pronouns as the linguistic expression of the fact that subject and object are, completely or partially, identical. Under direct and indirect object some new sections are added to the theory of word-order: he showed the strangers the way; he gave it me, etc. This chapter also deals with transitivity and intransitivity, among other things the curious use in "His plays won't act, and his poems won't sell", as well as the transitivity of some adjectives which can take an object: "he is not worth his salt".

**12. Passive.** By means of a passive instead of an active turn the relation between the two primaries connected with a verb is reversed. The chief reasons why a passive turn is used are (1) the active subject is unknown, (2) it is self-evident, (3) considerations of tact or delicacy, (4) greater interest in the passive than in the active subject, (5) ease of connexion with another sentence. In the recent development by which that which in the active is the indirect object may be made the subject of the passive, the greater interest generally felt for persons than for things has played a role no less than the loss of the distinctive case-forms. In "everybody laughed at Jim" *Jim* may be considered the object of the whole combination verb + preposition, and consequently may be made the subject of the passive: "Jim was laughed at by everybody"; in set phrases modern English goes even further: "She will be taken good care of". In this sentence as well as in "He was offered a reward" we see that a passive verb can have an object.

**13. Predicatives.** A distinction should be made between the two terms predicate and predicative. The former is the more com-

prehensive term: in "He was angry with me for speaking ill of his brother" everything except *he* is the predicate, but only *angry* is the predicative. Many logicians, and even some grammarians, are in the habit of analysing every sentence as containing a copula (link-verb) and a predicative, thus forcing all sentences into the same Procrustean bed without much regard to common sense or to idiom, for in English at any rate "he talks French" and "he is talking French" are not the same thing.

The best way of dealing grammatically with predicatives is not the usual one of starting with sentences containing the colourless verb *is*, but to take these as the final or nearly final links in a long series of descriptions, in which we pass from instances of extra-position ("There he sat, a giant among dwarfs") through gradual transitions ("We parted the best of friends", "he married young") to constructions in which the verb loses more of its full concrete force ("The natives go naked all the year", "she stood godmother to his child", "he stood about six feet high") and finally to constructions with verbs like *seem*, *prove*, *sound*, *look*, *be*, *remain*, *become*, etc. After these we may treat the numerous sentences in which not even a colourless link-verb is used; an interesting class contains those ironic exclamations in which a negative meaning is imparted: "He a gentleman!"; cf. also "Pretty mess we shall be in by then." Such sentences present many interesting features which are inadequately treated in ordinary grammars.

In connexion with the question what can be a predicative it will be natural to treat the rules for the use or non-use of the definite and indefinite article in predicatives, as well as the idiomatic English use of abstract words as predicatives (as in "when I was your age" and "she turned lead-colour").

In EEG I have not thought it necessary to speak of the logical meaning of *is* with a predicative, though I have treated it at some length elsewhere, but as my view has been criticized, I may say a little more on this matter here. In rare cases only *is* means perfect identity, what logicians denote by the sign  $\equiv$ : everyday language has little use for such judgments of identity ("So that's that!"). *Is* generally means 'belongs to (is one part, or one member of) the class denoted by the predicative'. The subject thus is more special

than the predicative. Therefore we understand that when one of the two is a proper name, this is nearly always the subject, and we see the reason why the predicative is so often provided with the indefinite article ("He is a liar"). Adjectives are as a rule less special than substantives, hence their frequent use in the predicative position ("The flower was white").

Now it has recently been objected to my view (by Brøndal, *Morfologi og syntax* (1932) p. 96) that it is easy to find examples in which the subject is less special than the predicative. Three examples are given; let me take the last one first: "All is vanity". But surely the meaning of this is that vanity is so comprehensive a category that whatever you may mention falls within it. The sentence thus confirms instead of refuting my contention. The same is really true of the negative sentence "nothing is more foolish" because its actual meaning is "everything [else] is less foolish"—in other words "this [what you say] is more foolish than anything else, this belongs to the class comprising the most foolish things".

Finally we have the sentence "This is to be medieval Paris by night" ("Dette skal være Paris ved nat i middelalderen", better translated: "This is meant to be, or This represents ..."). But surely *this* is as special, as concrete as possible, and the actual meaning is "What you see here is [part of] medieval Paris by night".

Brøndal says "The more or less abstract pronouns which stand at the beginning of the sentence as subjects are undoubtedly in themselves much more general [langt almenere] than the final elements which are to be taken as predicatives [attribut]". As already remarked *this* at any rate is not abstract, and *all* and *nothing* are difficult to class as either abstract or concrete. Brøndal also does justice to my view when he goes on to say that I seem to aim not at the meaning of words as such, but rather at the actual nuance in which the word is used in the given situation and context. Yes, exactly: I always like to move in the concrete everyday world and try to find out rules for sentences as these are actually spoken and understood in practical life.

**14. Case.** In many pronouns we have distinct case-forms: *I me, he him, who whom*, etc. What names are we to use for these? It

seems best to call them nominative and objective: historically the latter case corresponds in form to the Old English dative, but has taken over the functions of the OE. accusative as well: it would be misleading to use either of these terms to the exclusion of the other and even more misleading to use both, calling *me* an accusative in "she sees me" and a dative in "she gives me a penny".

With regard to the use of these forms English is at present in a stage of transition, in which the old way of distinguishing is giving way to a new system. The psychological causes of this change, as well as of the exclusive use of *you* in colloquial English, where the old language distinguished four forms *thou thee ye you*, were examined in *Progress in Language* 1894 (this chapter reprinted in *Chapters on English*). Some parts of this disquisition have found their way into EEG. Here I shall only call attention to the interesting fact not fully explained in my previous book that one and the same formula may be applied to the personal and to the interrogative-relative pronouns though seemingly the development has gone in two directions, towards the use of the objective instead of the nominative in the personal pronouns, and the use of the nominative *who* instead of the objective *whom*: In both cases the tendency is to use the old nominative exclusively in immediate conjunction with a verb: I go | do I go | who goes | Who did you see? | Who is that letter from?—but to use the old objective in all other positions: Not me! | What would you do if you were me? | he is bigger than me | is she as tall as me? In the case of *who* curiously enough the only two combinations in which *whom* is still naturally used are after *than* (Mr. N. than whom no one is more competent to form a judgment), where *whom* was thought incorrect a few centuries ago but is now recognized by everybody—and concatenated clauses like "children whom we think are hungry", where nearly all grammarians agree in considering *whom* a gross error. It is well worth observing that these are really the only instances in which the pronoun is not followed immediately by a finite verb—this is what the popular feeling has seized on so as to arrive at a rule similar to that obtaining with regard to *me*, etc.

In the substantives we have no case-distinction corresponding to that between *I* and *me*, but on the other hand a genitive: this

case is found only with some of the pronouns (its, his, whose, and then nobody's etc.); while in others we have the so-called possessive pronouns: *my mine, your yours, etc.*

*The man* thus has the same functions as *I* and *me*. Now what term are we to use for this case? Obviously neither nominative, accusative, dative nor objective would be adequate, and I see no better way than to use Sweet's name 'common case' (though Sonnenschein with some right asks: Common to what?).

It will be seen that I recognize only a small number of cases in modern English—smaller than in OE. or Latin—and not the same number for substantives as for pronouns. As there are still divergent opinions among scholars on this point it may not be amiss to say a few words here, even if it may involve some repetitions of what I have said in other books.

The number of cases to be recognized in a language (at one particular stage of its development) must be decided by the forms found in that language: case-distinctions are not notional or logical, but exclusively grammatical categories. No purely logical analysis can lead to a distinction between nominative, accusative, dative, etc. Nor can a comparison with other languages and their case-distinctions be regarded as decisive, for that would lead to consequences which no grammarian would accept. Some languages, even among those akin to English, have an instrumental case: shall we therefore recognize an instrumental in "throw stones"? Some languages have a special case, or even two special cases in which predicatives are put: shall we say that 'a teacher' is in the "predicative" case in "he is a teacher" and in the "illative" in "he became a teacher"? Thus we might continue—there is no end to the number of cases we might in this way be led to admit.

Sonnenschein (p. 12) would have it that English has a vocative case which is shown to be such by intonation. This looks more like a grammatical argument, for tone is in fact a formal element. Nevertheless it is wrong, for there is no special intonation that can be said to mark the vocative: "John!" may be said with a great many intonations and these indicate a variety of emotions (anger, surprise ...) just as an imperative like "Come!" may have exactly the same variety of tones on account of the same emotions—and just as the



name "John!" may have the same intonation, for instance, of surprise when it is not a "vocative" at all, but an exclamation in response to an astonishing report made in John's absence of something he had said or done.

Now it is said that it is necessary to recognize a dative case in English, e.g. in "I gave *the boy* an apple", for while it is true that there is no special form, the case-form is only the body, but the case-relation its soul, which is more important (Sonnenschein). "Just as many English words may belong to different parts of speech according to their functions in particular sentences (... *love* ...), so the uninflected form of an English noun may belong to different cases" (*Soul of Grammar* § 12). The parallel is not striking, for the reason why we recognize *love* now as a substantive, now as a verb, is not only that the function is different, but also that the inflexion is different (-s in one word plural or genitive, in the other 3rd person singular; -d and -ing are found exclusively in the verb).

It would be more to the point to turn the tables against me in this way: though *sheep* has the same form as it has in the singular, it is recognized as a plural in "two sheep", "his sheep are grazing on the hill", etc., because in the parallel sentences we should have the distinctive plural form *lambs*: now we have two case-forms in "he saw me" and "I saw him": why not therefore say that in "John saw Henry" *John* is a nominative and *Henry* an objective? The argument is plausible, but not final, because the parallel is not exact. In the first place the distinction between singular and plural is a notional one and belongs to logic, but that is not true to the same extent of the distinction between a nominative and an objective (accusative, dative) case. Secondly *sheep* and *lamb* belong to the same word-class, but it is not legitimate to transfer distinctions which are grammatically expressed in one word-class to another class. The class of pronouns in particular presents many peculiarities which are not found in other classes: the distinction according to sex (*he, she*) and according to life or want of life (*who, what*), according to rank (*mine, my*), according to definite or indefinite number of items to which they are applied (*each, every; which? who?*). None of these distinctions can be grammatically transferred to other classes, then why should this be allowed with regard to the case-distinction between nominative and objective?

Some grammarians who speak of a dative in English, would restrict it to the use as indirect object, though that is only one part of its functions in OE. Curme (Syntax 455) says that the preposition *to* "which in Old English usually took a dative object" now takes an accusative object as *today*. How do we know that? Is *him* in *to him* an accusative? Curme calls the whole group (*to him*) a dative in "I gave it to him"—though he would not use the same term in "I went up to him".

In his review of my book he recognizes as datives not only *to me*, but also *for me* (He bought the car for me as well as for you), even when it is used, as he calls it, "for disadvantage" (He is setting a trap for you), and—what is even more astonishing—*on me* ("He shut the door on me"). He says that *to*, *for*, *on*, originally [!] prepositions, are now "crystallizing into case signs". (Are *secretary to the Prime Minister* and *heir to a fortune* datives or genitives?) "That the new dative is grammatically the same as the old simple dative is proved by the fact that in translating Old English into modern English we often render an Old English simple dative by our modern dative with *to*, *for*, or *on*". Is Curme really prepared to say that an idiomatic rendering of OE. sentences is decisive of the grammatical analysis in present-day English? This seems to me extremely dangerous, for where shall we stop then?

Sonnenschein (p. 9) rightly objects to Deutschbein's definition according to which *in London*, *from London*, *with him*, *by them*, etc. would be entitled to the name of case. But his own definition does not make matters clearer. It runs: "A case is a form [N.B.] of a noun or pronoun or adjective standing, or capable of standing, in one of a particular group of relations to some other member or members of a sentence." As Collinson remarks in an excellent article (*Mod. Lang. Review* 33.132, 1928). "The definition is hardly a happy one, for we are not informed what particular group of relations is intended, and the subsequent exclusion of prepositional phrases is not warranted by the definition, for whatever the particular group of relations is, there can be no doubt that *him* in *give it him* and *to him* in *give it to him* express the identical particular relation of the pronoun to the other members of the sentence and are formally distinct." Collinson also calls attention to the "formidable

array of English accusative-functions" given by Sonnenschein himself: "where is the functional definition of the word accusative, which will cover them all?" Not even a "reorientation" by a course of Latin or German grammar can show the English pupil when he is in the presence of an accusative in his native language.<sup>1</sup>

Sonnenschein does not deny "the well-known fact that certain of the cases belonging to the Indo-European case-system have not survived as separate cases in modern English" (p. 18), yet he speaks of a dative, etc., in English, though only "dative proper", not a "dative improper" (as in German *aus dem hause*, *in dem hause*, *mit meinen freunden* which in the earliest Aryan times were in the ablative, locative or instrumental). Perhaps the difference between our three attitudes towards the theory of case can be expressed as follows: Curme lays stress exclusively on function, Sonnenschein more on function than on form, and I myself more on form than on function. Accordingly *to the man* and *of the man* to Curme are a dative and a genitive, to Sonnenschein a dative-phrase and a genitive-phrase, and to me simply prepositional phrases on a par with *against the man*, *without the man*, etc. (and with the use in "he went to London", "born of good stock", "we spoke of the war", etc.). This last view seems to me much clearer and more consistent than either of the others. (Cf. below on moods).

Grattan and Gurrey (*Our Living Language* p. 187) ask how we shall deal with the case of the first element of such groups as *gold ring*, *University education*, *cheese sandwiches*, etc. "The appertinent relation is the same as that of "ring of gold", "sandwiches of cheese", etc. Strictly speaking, therefore, these first elements are in the Genitive Case. But in practice it will probably suffice if you are content to label them more vaguely as Qualifiers". Such are the quandaries of those who do not restrict the term genitive to the forms in *s*. Note that *tea-pot* does not mean the same as *pot of tea*:

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<sup>1</sup> The fictive character of case-distinctions in Modern English appears clearly in the expressions used by Onions (Adv. I. Syntax 90) "To speak of a Noun as being in the Nominative, Accusative or Dative Case, is equivalent to saying that the noun would have been in that case in the corresponding O.E. Construction, or that the meaning expressed is such as we are accustomed to associate with that Case in inflected languages"

should we 'strictly speaking' admit two cases in *glass case* (made of glass) and *glass-case* (to contain glass)?

Curme is not afraid of pushing his case theory to extreme consequences. This is seen in his treatment of clauses, where he speaks of a genitive clause in "I reminded him that he had promised it". The argument is this: *John's father* is a genitive; now *the father of John* means the same thing; therefore *of John* is a genitive; *I reminded him of his promise* thus contains the genitive of *his promise*; consequently the clause *that he had promised it* must also be a genitive, thus also in *I am sure that he will support me*. It seems to me evident that not a single link in this chain of reasoning is valid. Synonymity does not imply grammatical one-ness, cf. the examples given EEG 36.7 and below. *I recalled to him his promise* (or *that he had promised*), *I made him remember his promise* (or *that ...*) might just as well have been adduced.

**15. Person.** It is perhaps to be regretted that the word *person* should have been used in grammar from very old times of the distinction between (1) speaker, (2) spoken to, (3) neither speaker nor spoken to. This is the correct definition of 'the third person', for 'what is spoken of' applies to the subject, no matter what 'person' it is. *It* and *what* and *the sun* are all of them 'third persons' though, of course, not 'persons' in the ordinary non-grammatical sense. *We* is not a typical 'first person' in the same way as *I*, of which it is said to be the plural, for it comprises either the second person or one or more belonging to the third person: hence the distinction made in some languages between an inclusive and an exclusive 'we'. Of this we have a feeble reverberation in English, in so far as *let us* in pronounced *let's* only when it is = myself + the person or persons addressed, so that it means an exhortation to common action (*let's go* = 'allons-nous-en, gehen wir'), but otherwise keeps the vowel of *us* (*let us go* = 'set us free', 'permettez-nous d'aller'). The dubious 'personal' character of *we* is also reflected in the hesitation between "most of us lost our heads" and "lost their heads".

To the second person must also be reckoned any 'vocative', though this must not be termed a case in English as in some other languages.

The term 'generic person' may conveniently be used for what comprises all three persons, e.g. Fr. *on*, German and Scandinavian *man*. English has no special pronoun for this, but according to circumstances uses *one* (*a fellow*, etc.), *you*, *we*, the latter two with a deeper emotional colouring than the more 'objective' *one*.

In a rational grammar one has no use for the term 'impersonal'; on *it* in *it rains*, etc. see below (16).

**16-18.** Pronouns. Many things concerning pronouns are dealt with in other chapters, namely those things that they have in common with other words (ranks, number, case, also person). In these chapters they are dealt with individually, and distributed into three sub-classes. Pronouns are indicators, and the indication may be either definite or indefinite or finally one of totality.

Among the pronouns of definite indication we have first those generally termed personal, which may be defined pronouns of contextual identification, because what they import in each case is nearly always made clear by the context or situation. The same is true to some extent of the pronouns of pointing (demonstrative in the true sense) which may be said to be parallel to the three persons, at any rate if there is a tripartition: *this* (with the pronominal adverbs *here* and *now*) referring to *I*, *that* (with *there* and *then*) to *you*, and *yon* (with *yonder*) to *he*, etc. But the distinction between the second and third person is not carried through in English, as *that* (with *there*, *then*) to a great extent has taken over the part of *yon* (*yonder*) which is nearly obsolete.

When such pronouns are called definite, it should be borne in mind that this is true of nearly all cases in which they are used, but that they are sometimes used idiomatically in such a way that it is at any rate difficult to see exactly what they refer to. Thus we have unspecified *it* in "it rains"; "we must have it out some day"; "you will catch it"; unspecified *they* in "they say he was murdered", unspecified *those* in "there are those who believe it", etc. Such uses can only be accounted for from the essential vagueness of the human mind, whose expressions cannot always be forced into strict logical compartments.

*The*, "the definite article", is *that* with a weakening of the

demonstrative force. *The* in a great many cases also refers to the context or situation: this is "the article of complete determination". In other cases it has to be supplemented by some other determining word or words, e.g. "the man we are talking about", "the man in the moon", "the plays of Shakespeare": this is "the article of incomplete determination". The use of the definite article in any of the languages in which it is found presents so many idiomatic features that it is no wonder that most grammarians are apt to give either too strict or too loosely worded rules and often fail to see the logical reasons underlying the various usages.

Among pronouns of definite indication we have also *same*, the pronoun of identity, and *such*, the pronoun of similarity, and then a group which most people will be surprised to see included in this class, namely the relatives. But it seems clear that *who* in "the man who said that" is just as definite as "the man ... he said that"—very often in colloquial speech *he* is used where literary language uses the relative—and that the only difference is that the relative pronoun serves to underline the connexion with what precedes by subordinating the nexus in which it occurs instead of coordinating it with the main nexus.

In the sub-class of pronouns of indefinite indication we meet first *one* and its weaker counterpart the indefinite article, the treatment of which presents difficulties similar to those encountered with *the*; then the 'pronoun of difference' *other* (the exact opposite of *same*) and a word which is not always considered a pronoun, viz. *a certain*, which may be termed the 'pronoun of discretion', because it serves in a curious way the purpose of indicating that the man or thing spoken of is definite enough in the mind of the speaker, but is purposely left indefinite in a communication to the hearer. Its pronominal character is shown by the use in the plural in a way other adjectives do not admit: 'certain of his friends pretend ...'.

Further this class comprises *some*, the 'pronoun of unspecified quantity', and the two 'pronouns of indifference', *any* and *either*, the latter referring to two only, while *any* is used of indifferent choice among a greater number. And finally we reckon among pronouns of indefinite indication all interrogative pronouns. Their inclusion in this sub-class is analogous to that of the relative pro-

nouns (chiefly the same forms) in the previous sub-class: an interrogative *who*, *which*, *what* besides being indefinite imparts an exhortation to the hearer to solve the uncertainty of the speaker by a definite answer.

The third sub-class 'pronouns of totality' are partly positive: *all*, *both*, *each*, *every*, partly negative: *no* (*none*) and *neither*. It is easy to see that these are really neither definite nor indefinite and therefore must form a class of their own.

**19. Gender.** This is a grammatical category, whereas sex belongs to natural history. But as English has given up gender-distinctions of the kind found in OE. and cognate languages, we have to examine the ways in which the natural sexes (male and female) and the distinction between animate and lifeless are expressed linguistically. Here in the substantives we have occasion to deal with one part of the rules for word-formation (*count countess*, *widow widower*, etc.), and on the other hand compounds like *man-servant*, *lady friend*, *dog-otter*, *bitch-otter*, *he-rabbit*, etc. The word *man* presents special difficulties as it sometimes denotes a human being without regard to sex, sometimes a (grown-up) male. In the pronouns we note the existence of some sexless pronouns for living, chiefly human, beings (*who*, *everybody*) while in other cases such a pronoun is sadly wanted (thus one instead of *he* or *she*), further the emotional use of sex-pronouns in speaking of lifeless things (*she* of a motor-car, etc.) as well as of States and similar human institutions and abstract ideas.

**20-21. Number.** Here as in 19 (and in 23) the notional (natural) categories are simple enough, but the grammatical expressions are more complicated. Naturally we distinguish between 1, 2, 3, 4 ... in a series extending as far as we care to go (when we don't care to go further we speak of 'infinite' numbers), and it is also natural to single out *one* and lump together what is more than one as 'plural' and to give linguistic expression to that idea. Further, it is natural to have expressions for indefinite numbers: *some sixty*, *sixty odd*, *many*, *few*, etc. *Some* with a singular substantive is also indefinite: perhaps one, perhaps a little more or less: "he stayed here some week."

It is a great advantage of the English language that secondary words are so often indifferent with regard to number: the *red* rose, the *red* roses; I *can* sing, we *can* sing; he *went*, they *went*. Still some secondary words make a distinction between singular and plural: *this* rose, *these* roses; he *goes*, they *go*. Where such distinctions exist, they are apt to create difficulties, but the number of these is smaller in English than in most related languages.

Though many grammarians use the word *collective* in a very loose way, it is possible—and important—to give a logically consistent meaning to this term if we understand that it is logically the opposite of *mass-word*, with which idea it is often confused: a *collective* is logically at the same time one and more than one, it means a higher unit, but still a unit though consisting of more than one and as it is a unit it is possible to form a new plural from it. Examples are *family*, *nation*, *party*: (a cricket) *eleven*; a *dozen*, etc. Some words may be used metaphorically of a body of persons: the *Bench* (= judges), the *toun*. This double-sidedness of collective gives rise to various interesting grammatical phenomena.

*Mass-words* are totally different, logically they are neither singular nor plural because what they stand for is not countable. But as a natural consequence of the grammatical structure of our languages any substantive has to be formally either a singular or a plural, so we have singular mass-words such as *gold*, *tea*, and plural mass-words like *embers*, *dregs*. The same applies to immaterial mass-words: singular *leisure*, *knowledge*, plural *mathematics*, *measles* (but these are often treated grammatically as singulars). It is not possible linguistically to keep the category of mass-words clearly distinct from countables because many words are used in both capacities: *much*, *cake*, *many cakes*; *his hair is sprinkled with grey* = *he has some grey hairs*, etc.

We speak of *generic number* when an assertion is made equally applicable to each member of a whole class. Linguistically there is no fixed rule for such cases: sometimes the singular, sometimes the plural is used, sometimes there is no article, sometimes the definite and sometimes the indefinite article, so that the italicized words in the following sentences are really on the same footing logically speaking: *Man* is mortal; *a cat* has nine lives; *the dog* is vigilant



*dogs* are vigilant; *the English* are fond of out-door sports. We must specially mention the use of mass-words without the article: *Lead* is heavier than *iron*; *art* is long, etc.

The uncertainty in all such cases shows that we have here to do with a notional, not a grammatical category. This explains the deviations between different languages; with mass-words we have, for instance in Danish and German (without the article) "Bly er tungere end jern; blei ist schwerer als eisen", but (in speaking of immaterial masses) "Kunsten er lang; die kunst ist lang". Where English has "The burned child dreads the fire", Danish, German and French have no article: "Brændt barn skyr ilden; gebrannt kind fürchtet das feuer; chat échaudé craint l'eau froide". This proverb may serve to elucidate the psychological basis of the grammatical use of the singular in this generic sense: when a child (any child) has once burned its fingers with coming into contact with fire, it generalizes and draws the conclusion that what has happened once will (or may) happen in all cases. This way of drawing conclusions from one occurrence is common to all mankind. When *a* is used in expressions for the generic, it may be considered a weaker *any*: when *the* is used, it is to be compared with the use of the article to denote 'the typical' as in "He is quite the gentleman". The possibility of using now the definite, now the indefinite expression is connected with the fact that "all" is neither definite nor indefinite in the usual sense, whence also our setting up of a third class of pronouns outside those of definite and indefinite indication. But note the distinction between the two meanings of *all* (1) what is true of each individual taken separately, and (2) what is true of all individuals taken together. The distinction is finely expressed in Diderot's saying: "Tout change, tout passe, il n'y a que le tout qui reste". It is only in the latter sense that *all* can form the basis for a pantheistic religion (Gr. to hen kai pan).

Note in this connexion also the use of *things* == 'things generally', indefinite, but nearly == everything, e.g. "How have things been going on in my absence?"

With this generic number should be compared the other notional categories of generic person (French *on*), generic sex (*u bo, the*) == he or she), generic time (twice two is four; men *were* deceivers ever, EEG 23.4 and 23.6.)

**22. Degree.** The three degrees (positive, comparative, superlative) are in themselves simple enough, and little is needed here to explain this chapter, cf. PG 244 ff. Evidently the expressions 'Romance' or 'French comparative' and 'superlative' can no more be used of the periphrases with *more* and *most*, than *of the King* can be termed 'French genitive', yet some grammarians persist in using such terms.

Are we entitled to call *more difficult* a comparative, and *most difficult* a superlative, of *difficult* in the same way that we say that *stronger* and *strongest* are the comparative and superlative of *strong*? I think so, even though we do not call *of the King* a genitive. The two things are not parallel, for *more* is undoubtedly a comparative and *most* a superlative, while *of* cannot by any means be termed a genitive, but is and must remain a preposition (a particle).

There is a good deal of loose thinking with regard to the degrees of comparison, chiefly because people are accustomed to look upon the three grades *strong*, *stronger*, *strongest* as standing in the relation 1—2—3 (or 1—2—4), whereas the truth is that the superlative does not mean more than the comparative, but means the same from a different point of view (A is stronger than B, C, and D = A is the strongest of A, B, C, and D) and the positive does not mean less than the comparative.

It is particularly in speaking of the so-called 'absolute comparative' that people make curious mistakes. Examples of this comparative are *the lower classes*, *the higher criticism*, *longer poems*, etc., German *die höheren schulen*, *aus besserer familie*, Dan. *en bedre middag*, Lat. *senectus loquacior*, etc. First, as to the value of these expressions: G. W. Small (*The Comparison of Inequality*, 1924, p. 10) is wrong when he sees in them a strong positive: *Higher education*, he says, is an emphatic way of saying 'high' as opposed to 'low', or 'elementary'. On the contrary this comparative is often anything but emphatic. Hebbel once said that it was "absurd" (*wider-sinnig*) that in German *ein älterer mann* was younger than *ein alter mann*. In Danish also a lady will generally prefer to be called *en ung dame* rather than *en yngre dame*.

Ph. Aronstein (*Englische stilistik*, 1924, 185) sees in the German absolute comparative an example of the illogical desultory German

way of thinking, and as these constructions are more frequent in German than in English and are tabooed (*ganz verpönt*) in French, he is open-minded enough to recognize a logical gradation in this respect in the three nations. But the reason why this turn is avoided in French is probably that the French comparative is expressed by means of *plus*: it is thus not one but two words. Anyhow Aronstein is wrong when he says that the absolute comparative is not "beziehungslos" because it is really a comparative of the opposite of the positive. The higher schools are not a higher grade of the high schools, but of the lower schools.<sup>1</sup> Even if we admit that longer poems are longer than short poems, this does not mean that *longer* is the comparative of *short*, for in that case *older* in "Tom is older than Ann" must be the comparative of Ann! Of course if *longer* were really the comparative of *short*, usage would be as illogical as possible, but on the contrary usage is perfectly logical, and *longer* is here as elsewhere the comparative of *long* and nothing else.

These critics start from the assumption that the comparative normally means a higher grade than the positive, so that *longer* = 'more than long', etc., but this is wrong: the comparative implies, not a comparison between two qualities, but between two (persons or things) possessing a quality in different degrees. If, as in the expression "longer poems", there is no mention of the second member of comparison, the implication cannot, of course, be 'longer than all others', but only 'longer than some'—and then we see how this comes to be a relatively weak expression, for the "some" need not be many, not even the average. If, on the contrary, a poem is characterized as long, or a man as old, no comparison is expressed, and the meaning therefore naturally is 'longer, or older, than might be expected': the positive therefore is stronger than the comparative.<sup>2</sup> And it will be seen that the expression 'absolute comparative' is inexact, for there is never anything absolute in a comparative.

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<sup>1</sup> "Die 'höheren schulen' sind nicht eine steigerung der hohen oder hochschule, sondern der niedern schulen. 'die besseren klassen' bilden keinen höheren grad der guten klassen, sondern der schlechten, d. h. gewöhnlichen klassen, die 'neuere geschichte' ist nicht neuer als die neue, sondern als die alte geschichte, usw."

<sup>2</sup> In a Danish comic paper I find the conversation "God dag, gamle ven, hvordan har du det? — Tak, det er bedre — Ja, ja, det er da godt det er bedre! — A ja, men det var dog bedre, om det var godt!"

In a certain sense we can therefore say that *old* is the highest grade: the boy who is older than his fellows, or the oldest of his class need not be old. Linguistic usage is more reasonable than its critics!

A comparison between two objects is not always expressed by means of the 'degrees of comparison'. Compare, for instance, the following expressions:

X is stronger than N	N is weaker than X
	N is not so strong as X
X surpasses (excels, beats) N	N is surpassed (excelled, beaten) by X
X is superior to N	N is inferior to X
the superiority of X to N	the inferiority of N to X
X's victory over N	N's defeat by X.

All these expressions mean virtually the same relation between X and N; the second column indicates the converse of the first one. Grammatically the expressions are not on the same footing and must therefore be treated in different chapters. In the two last lines we have dependent nexuses, in all the others independent ones.

**23-24.** Tense. I have here, as elsewhere, insisted on the distinction between the notional category time and the grammatical category tense; this is particularly necessary if we want to understand the imaginative use of tenses, as in *I wish I had* (now), *if I had*, etc.

The treatment in EEG is in so far different from that in volume IV of MEG as I have here given a conspectus of the forms. But in dealing with the formation of the preterit and the second participle it proved impracticable to keep up the old distinction between 'strong' and 'weak' verbs which is so important for Gothic and even OE., but which has in course of the development of English been disturbed in very many ways. Verbs like *let*, *set*, *shed* (*must*) have to be classed together now, whatever the origin of their inflexion or want of inflexion. The old gradation-classes have lost all significance.

With *dare* and *need* we see two conflicting tendencies, one to treat these verbs as auxiliaries: without *s* in the third person, without *to* before an infinitive (cp. *can*, *may*), and to some extent without

tense-distinction (cp. *must*), and the other to treat them as full verbs, with *s* in the third person, with *to* before an infinitive, and with a distinct preterit form (*dared, needed*); cp. *he daren't go* = *he didn't dare to go*. But the two are not always kept separate.

**25-26.** *Will, would, shall, should* are best treated in such a way that we take first each verb in its old full meaning and afterwards its gradual dwindling down into a mere auxiliary of the future time, though the resultant combination cannot be recognized as a tense to be placed on the same footing as the preterit or even the perfect with *have*. The chief difficulties met with in English, apart from dialectal varieties, are due to the fact that English has only two verbs to fill three functions, that of volition, of obligation, and of future time. Similarly with *would* and *should*, which are chiefly used imaginatively, and only rarely to express real past time.

**27.** Mood. When we turn to the subjunctive we meet with the same three points of view as those we have already noted in connexion with cases. Sonnenschein says (p. 61): "Whether the verb is *shown* to be a subjunctive by its form or not does not matter in the least" in sentences like "We must do our work as if no one *existed*" or "he *could* if he *would*": "the English as well as the corresponding German and Latin forms *are* subjunctives both from an historical and from a semantic point of view". On the other hand he says (p. 87): "For the purpose of comparing English usage with the usage of other languages it is necessary to limit the term 'subjunctive' to such forms as correspond to the forms commonly called subjunctives in other languages" and therefore excludes subjunctive-equivalents composed of auxiliaries like *may, might, would* plus the infinitive. (But what about *wav* in "I wish I was rich"? This is historically an indicative, but functions like the subjunctives mentioned in his § 127). Curme, on the other hand, recognizes as subjunctives not only the simple verb-forms, but also a great variety of composite expressions with auxiliaries, *may, will*, etc. Even "Let him come in" is "the modern subjunctive form corresponding to the old simple subjunctive" (p. 394). *We have to sell our house* "was originally an indicative . . . but it is now used also with subjunctive force

indicating the will of a person ... Also sentence-adverbs have this modal force: He will *necessarily* arrive late" (p. 395). In "it may rain" *rain* "is no longer felt as an infinitive, but as a component element of a subjunctive form" (p. 455). There is something called in modern slang "going the whole hog".

In my own exposition only that is reckoned as mood which finds a formal expression in the verb itself; thus *may write* is not a mood of *write*, and neither is *would write* or *should write*. The two latter have been treated in a separate chapter; *may write* is mentioned among other expressions for future time, along with *writes*, *is going to write* and others; and *you may go now* (= 'I allow you to') is a present, and a present indicative. Consequently this chapter is very short, the more so as the distinction between *was* and *were* has found a better place in the section dealing with the imaginative use of the preterit, because the old mood-distinction is being obliterated, so that *was* has to a great extent taken over the functions of *were*. (Moreover these two forms have never been clear expressions of mood, as *were* with a plural subject may just as well be in the indicative).

It may be questioned if it is worth while to put up a separate imperative and present subjunctive, as the forms are always identical, and incidentally identical with the infinitive. This common form is here called the 'base'. *God bless the King* with one intonation, and a pause after *God*, is in the imperative (as a prayer), and with another intonation, and without a pause, a present subjunctive (as a wish). If further we compare "May God bless the King", in which a wish is differently expressed, and *bless* is an infinitive, we discover that present-day English is in a stage of transition in which the old moods are losing their old significance. See below under infinitive.

**28. Affirmation, Negation, Question.** A question implies a request to the hearer(s) to answer. (Other requests, asking the hearer to act in a specified way, are expressed by means of imperatives, of amorphous sentences like "Two third returns Brighton" or "Hands up!", or of other sentences pronounced in a commanding tone, e.g. "You will pack at once and leave this house", etc.).

Among affirmative sentences we must specially mention emphatic

statements; and common to all the three categories here treated is the extensive use of *do*, often in the way alluded to above, by which an auxiliary attracting the marks for person, number and tense is placed first and the real significant word comes later without any flexional marks. In this chapter again we have occasion to speak of the important role played in English by word-order.

Next come seven chapters dealing with dependent nexuses.

**29.** The simplest form consists of a mere collocation of a primary and an adnex. The nexus itself may be an object or a tertiary, but the essential one-ness of these two constructions is overlooked in ordinary grammars, in which the first is termed variously "accusative of the direct object and an objective predicate", "accusative with the predicative", "predicative of object" or "double object" and the second "absolute construction" ("absolute nominative" or "absolute accusative", "absolute participle"). Examples of the first are "we found the cage empty, the bird gone; she thought him a great scholar; she made him happy; he painted the door red, this drove him mad; he had a tooth out; he slept himself sober; you cannot explain this away; after a preposition: don't speak with your mouth full; she sat with the colour quite gone from her face; etc. etc. Examples of the second kind (nexus tertiaries) are: All things considered the offer seems reasonable; that being so, he wasted no words on the matter; he tumbled down head foremost; he stood there, hat in hand and pipe in mouth. It will be seen that the name "absolute participle" is not felicitous, for no participle is required—and "absolute" is not to the point.

It is easy to see that in each of these combinations we have not a junction, but as clear a nexus as in clauses like "we found that the cage was empty", "when all things are considered", etc. But of course this is not the same thing as saying that we have here "abridged" clauses: synonyms are not grammatically identical, and clauses cannot be considered the "real thing", of which the other constructions are only substitutes. Besides, it is not easy everywhere to find a clause expressing exactly the same idea as that found in the nexus-constructions.

**30.** Nexus-substantives. These are generally denoted by the unmeaning name of "abstracts", and their real essence as implying a nexus is overlooked. There are two kinds, one containing the idea of a predicative (*pride* = being proud; *kindness* = being kind, etc.) and the other containing the idea of a verb (*sleep*, *fight*, *conquest*, *examination*: nomina actionis—but can sleep be termed an action?).

The most interesting thing in connexion with these words is the way in which that element which in a sentence (with a finite verb) would be the subject or an object is expressed in connexion with a nexus-substantive. As to the predicative nexus-words there is little difficulty, as there can be only one member combined with them, which then is put in the genitive (the woman's pride, her pride, kindness, etc.) or expressed by an *of*-phrase (the pride, kindness of the woman). With the verbal nexus-substantives there are two possibilities, and if we have a genitive, we therefore distinguish between a subjective and an objective genitive, as in *the Doctor's arrival* and *the Doctor's defeat*, respectively. We may say that in the first case the substantive is taken in an active, in the second in a passive sense. In both instances an *of*-phrase may be substituted for the genitive.

In some cases both what would be the subject and what would be the object are expressed, as in "his avoidance of my brother", and as with full verbs in the passive there is now a tendency to use the preposition *by*: "The reception of the guests by Lady Miller" (= Lady Miller's reception of the guests). Those who use case-terms for prepositional phrases are here confronted with a difficulty: can *by Lady Miller* be termed a subjective genitive? If so, would the term be extended to the parallel use in "The guests were received by Lady Miller?" And is *over matter* in "the control of mind over matter" an objective genitive? Is it not better to avoid all such case-terms?

**31.** The gerund. In English this is always formed with the ending *-ing* which is also used for the first participle, and this coincidence involves some questions of great historical and theoretical interest which will not, however, be dealt with in this place. The gerund is a nexus-substantive, which differs from other nexus-substantives, in so far as it has acquired some of the syntactical peculiarities of finite



verbs: it can have an adverb (tertiary) joined to it, it has a perfect and a passive; this verbal character is also manifested when it can take an object without *of* and when it can have a subject preposed in the common case. For all these things I may refer to EEG and to my paper in *S.P.E.* tract no. 25.

**32.** The Infinitive. Nothing is really gained by defining the infinitive as "the most general form of the verb", or "the verb-form that expresses the verbal notion without predicating it of any subject" or "that form of the verb which denotes action or existence without limitation of person, number or tense". This last definition is obviously wrong as far as many languages are concerned, for in Portuguese, for instance, we have infinitives inflected as to person and number, and numerous languages have tense-forms in the infinitive (Greek, Latin; cf. also the English perfect infinitive). And what does it mean to say that the infinitive does not predicate the verbal notion of any subject? The same can be said of such a form as *can* or *may* or any Danish present like *skriver*: only when a subject is mentioned, such forms predicate the verbal notion of the subject, but then they do it effectively,—and the same is true of the infinitive in connexions like "he made the horse run". Further it should be remembered that many languages have a so-called historical infinitive, which predicates just as well as any finite form. Nor is anything gained by ranging the infinitive as one of the "moods" of the verb.

Comparative grammar long ago discovered that the infinitive in our (Aryan) family of languages was originally a verbal substantive (nomen actionis) i.e. what is here called a nexus-substantive. And though the infinitive has in many ways lost much of its substantival character and has adopted many syntactical constructions originally reserved for finite verb-forms, it has never lost its capacity of expressing a nexus. Hence its place in my system after nexus-substantives and gerunds and before (dependent) clauses, which generally contain a finite verb.

As already remarked under Mood, a systematic difficulty is created in English—but not in the related languages—by the fact that the original endings have all worn off so that the infinitive is everywhere reduced to the same form as the present indicative (apart

from the 3rd person singular), the present subjunctive, and the imperative—the form that is here called the *base*. Are we then entitled to reckon the infinitive as a special grammatical category? It will be remembered that we laid special stress on form distinctions as decisive as to the question how many grammatical categories to recognize. The correct solution of this difficulty seems to be this: the base must be recognized as a real grammatical *category* in English, but just as we have different *uses* of the ‘common case’ (as subject, as object, as first part of compound, as tertiary), we have different employments of the base. The base *drink* is used in (1) “I may drink”, “I want to drink”, (2) “drink this!”, (3) “I drink”, (4) “if he drink”. If thus the essential unity of the base is admitted, no harm is done by employing different names for these various uses, and if we are to have such names it would seem unpractical to coin new ones. I have therefore had no hesitation in continuing to employ the name infinitive for the uses here specified as no. 1, thus both when the infinitive is “bare” (I may *drink*) and when it is preceded by the preposition *to* (I want to *drink*). This may be compared to the nomenclature used when we call *drinking* in one employment a participle, in another a gerund, *one* now a numeral, now a prop-word, now a pronoun, *which* now an interrogative, now a relative pronoun: in all such cases the seeming inconsistency in our terms is nothing but the reverberation of an inconsistency in the facts of the language itself; nor would it be possible to disregard the distinctions indicated in our terms, for there are differences between the participle and the gerund *drinking* (e.g. in his *drinkings*), between *one* as a prop-word (which can have a plural) and as a numeral, between the two *which*’es (the interrogative refers to a definite number and may be used of persons), etc. It would be unscientific to have the same denominations for these distinct uses—and these distinctions are much more real and palpable than those between a dative and an accusative, etc.

In the grammatical treatment of the infinitive it seems impracticable to have one section devoted to the bare infinitive, and another to the prepositional phrase (with *to*), as the two are inextricably mixed together. *To* of course is a preposition, but though its original force is still seen in some combinations (“we are led to believe ...”)

it is more or less obliterated in most connexions, as is also the case with the corresponding prepositions used in other languages (German *zu*, Scandinavian *at*, Gothic *du*, to some extent also French *de* and *à*). There seems thus to be a general tendency to let an infinitive be preceded by an "empty" word, a particle which has not even the same significance as an article before a substantive, because it does not like the article denote whether a notion is to be taken as definite or indefinite.

I hope I may claim that the treatment of the infinitive in EEG is more consistent than that found in some recent grammars, because I do not separate the use of the infinitive after *will* and *shall* from that after *can*, *must*, *had better*, etc.

**33-35.** Clauses are distributed according to their rank into primary, secondary and tertiary clauses. Among the first a special name is needed for those that are commonly called 'noun-clauses' or 'substantive clauses' as in 'I believe that he is ill'. Curme (in his review of my vol. III) thinks that my reason for objecting to the name of noun clause is that these clauses have not the formal characteristics of a noun; but, as I have said expressly (III.2.1), I have three reasons, (1) these clauses are not really nouns or substantives, but have only one quality in common with substantives, namely that of being able to stand as primaries, (2) the same quality is found also in many interrogative and relative clauses, (3) I prefer using the word 'noun' in the original and wider sense in which it comprises both substantives and adjectives. I am glad to find that Collinson speaks of my words *content-clause* and *contact-clause* as "neat word-coinages designed to embody his [my] classifications with sharper relief".

Examples of interrogative clauses that are subjects or objects, thus primaries, are "How he got there was the problem", "I don't know how he got there", "All depends on how he got there". There is some tendency to do without a preposition before such a clause, but to call the clause in "He was not sure whether he had left his umbrella at school or on the play-grounds" a genitive clause (Curme 240) seems to me a misuse of grammatical terminology (cf. above under Case).

Examples of relative clauses as primaries are "Who steals my purse steals trash", "Whoever says so is a liar", "What money I have is at your disposal", "You may marry whom you like", "You may dance with whom you like". Unfortunately it is not quite superfluous to state expressly that it is the whole relative clause that is the subject, the object of the verb, or the object of the preposition, in such cases, and not an imaginary *he*, etc., to which the relative clause is an adjunct.

On clauses as secondaries (the majority of relative clauses) and tertiaries I have nothing to say in this place.

**36. Retrospect.** This gives a morphological survey of the various grammatical means employed in English: the unchanged word, stress and tone, other phonetic modifications, endings, separate roots (what German scholars call *suppletivwesen*), form-words (empty words like auxiliaries, prepositions, etc.) and word-order. This synopsis might have been supplemented with a similar review of the notions expressed grammatically; but this has been deemed superfluous, seeing that such a survey is really already contained in the headings of most of the chapters, together with remarks in the chapters themselves. The fullest conspectus of that kind is the one found in the "Notional survey of time-expressions", 26.9.

In connexion with this retrospect there is a small collection of grammatical synonyms, like "Shakespeare's plays—the plays of Shakespeare", "I beg your pardon—What did you say?", etc. They serve to illustrate what ought to be an axiom in all linguistic disquisitions, namely that the mere fact that two constructions or expressions mean the same thing is not sufficient to class them together grammatically or to use the same grammatical term in speaking of them. But grammarians often sin against this fundamental principle, as has already been pointed out in some of the preceding pages. It is the same fallacy that is at the bottom of such expressions in recent books as the following: "*In he bates shopping* hat *bates* nur modalen wert = deutsch *ungern*". "*To trifle with* in *He is not a man to trifle with* is an abridged relative clause". "*He is unkind to all opposing him* contains an abridged dative clause". "*Happened* is adverbial in *he happened to fall*". "The *ing* in *missed being, kept recurring*, is

only an apparent object, the governing verb being in reality a modifier only". "The *to* of the infinitive has become a conjunction, so that we speak of a *to*-clause just as we speak of a *that*-clause: I am not eager to go". In all such cases—and they might be multiplied—we are according to my view justified in speaking of squinting-grammar—grammar squinting at translations in other languages or at other constructions in the same language—instead of looking straight before one, as one should always try to do.

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The man who wants to write "Essentials of English Grammar" is confronted with a great many difficulties. Often he will hesitate what to include and what to leave out: for what is essential and what not? Then there is the elusive character of much of the matter itself. Usage wavers on many points. English Grammar forms a system—but is not everywhere systematic. What is distinctly notional and what is purely grammatical should be kept apart—but to make the distinction is not always an easy matter. Grammatical phenomena can, and should, be looked at from two angles: from without and from within. The former is the morphological, the latter the syntactic point of view—but sometimes one and sometimes the other presses forward as the more important. Perfect lucidity and precision is impossible without a good terminology—but the usual grammatical terms are often unsatisfactory and insufficient. Hence the necessity of coining a few new terms. There are thus many pitfalls for the grammarian—not to mention those occasioned by the fact that English is not the writer's mother-tongue. Let me hope I have not fallen into too many of them.

—*Linguistica*, 1933.

## THE TEACHING OF GRAMMAR <sup>1</sup>

In discussions about the teaching of grammar at school, as it was in former times and is still, to a great extent, the adjectives that are most often put in requisition are *dull, uninteresting, too difficult, abstract, useless*; and to this the student of historical grammar and of the modern science of language will feel inclined to add the complaint that grammar as usually taught has not kept abreast with recent research and is thus unscientific. On the whole, not a bad budget of complaints, especially as we are bound to admit that they are not wholly devoid of truth, and that the teaching of grammar really leaves much to be desired. If now we want to find out what would be the ideal of such teaching, we have only to apply the opposite adjectives and to say that the teaching of grammar should be made as interesting and stimulating as possible, as easy and simple as possible, concrete instead of abstract, useful and at the same time scientifically sound. The question before us is how to attain that ideal, or rather, as we must allow for human imperfection, how to approach that ideal.

Some very interesting remarks on our problem are found in the extremely valuable report on the *Teaching of English in England*, published by the Departmental Committee in 1921, and I beg leave to take their report as the starting point of what I have to

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<sup>1</sup> [Readers who are more interested in practical conclusions than the grounds on which they are based might profitably begin their consideration of this article on page 172.—EDITOR.]

## THE TEACHING OF GRAMMAR

say myself on the question. The committee begin by saying that though the structure of the English language has changed considerably from the system found in its earlier stages and in such cognate languages as Latin and Greek, the structure of our thought remains the same; therefore there is a grammar which can be taught through the medium of the English language. But this grammar is not "English" grammar, it is pure grammar; it is concerned with the essential modes of thought of all peoples, whatever languages they may speak. And because it is pure grammar, because it deals with laws which are of universal application, because it is independent of grammatical forms, this kind of grammar is the true introduction to linguistic study, whatever foreign language may be taken up later. The committee, therefore, strongly advocate the teaching of "pure grammar, a grammar of function, not of form," and say that it must be closely allied with phonetics, and that the terminology employed should be that common to the grammars of all languages—i.e., that recommended in the report of the Joint Committee on Grammatical Terminology.<sup>1</sup>

I shall now try to subject these various points to a critical examination. In the first place, I must express my feeling of joy and gratitude at the unconditional recognition of the importance of phonetics. Here we have something that has been shamefully neglected by most teachers and which can be made very valuable indeed. Even comparatively small children will take an intelligent interest in the way in which their own speech-sounds are produced; you may make them undertake voyages of discovery in the way their lips and tongue are used to form consonants and vowels; they can find out much for themselves and may even be led to build up a systematic scheme of all the principal sounds found in their own language. This study is much more interesting than any amount of spelling lessons, because the children can be made to see the reasons for things, which they cannot in the irrational and nearly always purely arbitrary rules governing our traditional spelling. And not only is this study of phonetics interesting; it is also useful as leading naturally to a clearer and more distinct

<sup>1</sup> This refers to a British committee, not the American one of which most *Journal* readers would think [L.B.R.R.O.R.]

enunciation in reading aloud and in talking, and thus paving the way for one of the most important fine arts, the art of fine speech or "elocution."

But let me here at once emphasize that the phonetics taught should not be "pure phonetics"—i.e., the phonetics common to all languages, whatever their sound-systems. Taught in this way, phonetics would necessarily become dry and abstract and be of no practical use whatever. No, the phonetics taught in school should be as concrete as possible, should deal first and foremost with the sounds found in the pupils' own speech and in the language which they hear every day. Their own local dialect, and the "received" or "standard" pronunciation of their teachers must be taken as the basis of analysis; but then that basis, if examined in the true scientific spirit—though without the use of the learned terminology of the scientific phonetician—will form an extremely valuable fundament on which to build, when at a later stage the pupil comes to take up the study of French or of any other foreign tongue. That, however, is outside my task today, and I will resume by saying that the first vivifying element to be brought into the teaching of grammar is the study of sounds in preference to letters.

Next we come to that part of grammar which is more immediately concerned with the structure of our thought. Unfortunately, the committee give only the vaguest hints as to what they would include in the pure grammar they want to teach, mentioning only the facts that sentences contain subjects and predicates, and that, as they say cautiously, *most* of our words can be classified in the time-honoured "parts of speech." I may be too pessimistic, but I am afraid that this will lead to laying too much stress on definitions in the first teaching of grammar, and if there is one thing I dislike in grammar, it is definitions of the kind too frequently met with in textbooks. They are neither exhaustive nor true; they have not, and cannot have, the precision and clearness of the definitions found in textbooks of mathematics, and it is extremely easy to pick holes in them. "A sentence is a group of words which makes sense": why a group of words? Isn't *Go!* or *Stop!* a sentence in itself? Why "makes sense"? *He is older*



*than his father* or *The moon was made of green cheese*—these groups of words make nonsense, but nevertheless both sayings are perfect sentences from the grammatical point of view. “A verb is a word by means of which something is said of a person or thing”: well, if I say “You fool!” I certainly do say something about the person thus addressed without, however, using any verb, and if I amplify the sentence into “You are a fool” it is not the empty verb *are* but the predicative *fool* by means of which something is said about that person. And thus we might go on with all the definitions found even in the best grammars: they are unsatisfactory all of them, and I do not think they are necessary. When children begin to learn about cats and dogs, they do not start with the definition of what a cat is or what a dog is, but they are shown first one cat and told that that is a cat, and then another, and so on, till they have no difficulty in recognizing a cat when they see one, and the want of any definition does not prevent them from learning a good many facts concerning cats. The same method may just as well be used with regard to substantives and adjectives, etc. But I may be wrong—I hope I am wrong—in my apprehension that those who want to teach pure grammar will pay too much attention to definitions. It remains to ask, what can be the contents of that pure grammar which is said to be common to all languages and to illustrate the essential modes of thought of all peoples?

In the eighteenth century, it was customary to talk about “philosophical grammar” or “natural grammar,” which was supposed to be common to all languages or to be a kind of common denominator to which all the particular grammars of individual languages could and should be reduced, or as Diderot expresses it, “there is a general grammar, and then exceptions in every language, which are called idiotisms,” or, as we should now say, idiomatic expressions. In the last century or so the tendency has been rather to emphasize the diversity of human speech and therefore to deny the existence of any universal grammar, but now the idea is coming back, beautified by the name of “pure grammar.” Now it is clear that grammatical forms vary from language to language, and therefore pure grammar is identified with a grammar of function. The

problem thus is reduced to this: can grammatical function be imagined and taught apart from grammatical form, and is grammatical function universal, that is, common to all mankind? Both these questions I should feel inclined to answer in the negative.

Rightly considered, we have not in grammar a twofold division, form and function, but a threefold division, (a) form, (b) function, and (c) inner meaning. There are three classes of categories, (a) formal categories, (b) syntactic categories, and (c) categories of meaning, or, as we may call them, notional categories. In the first main division of grammar, morphology, we must keep together what from a purely formal point of view is the same thing, i.e., the same form—ending, prefix, vowel-modification, or whatever it may be—no matter in what word it is used.

In English grammar, for instance, we have to deal with the ordinary *s*-ending with its three phonetic varieties, voiced [z] in *bags*, voiceless [s] in *backs*, and a full syllable [iz] in *kisses*. From a purely formal point of view this ending is the same, whether it serves to make a substantive into a plural, as in *hats, bats, cats*, etc., or to form a genitive, as in *Robert's, the count's, Jack's*, or to make a verb into the third person singular of the present tense, as in *takes, sits*, etc. Similarly we have one and the same formal change when the singular *foot* is made into the plural *feet*, and when the substantive *food* is made into the verb *feed*. Thus the same form, or the same formal change, often serves different purposes, and it is the business of morphology not only to classify the forms, but also to state what the functions of these forms are, always looking at them from without, from the outer form. But I think that in morphology thus considered word-order should also enter, for if we compare the two sentences "Jack loves Jill" and "Jill loves Jack," the two functions of subject and object are unmistakably indicated in the outward form of the sentences, though there is nothing in the forms of the names *Jack* and *Jill* themselves to indicate those functions, as there would be in Latin and many other languages.

In the second chief division of grammar, which we may call syntax, though it does not exactly cover what is usually designated

by that name, we deal with exactly the same grammatical facts as in morphology, only instead of looking at them from without, i.e., from the point of view of form (*a*), we here look at them from within, i.e., from the point of view of function (*b*). Here we start from such a function as that of plurals in the substantives, and bring together the various ways in which the plural is formed, by the *s*-ending as in the examples given above, by *-en* in *oxen*, by vowel-change in *feet* and *men*, by a combination of vowel-change and ending in *children* and by the unchanged form of the singular as in *sheep*. But the rules for using all these plurals are the same, no matter how they are formed. In another part of our syntax we speak of superlatives, stating first the various ways in which they are formed, which in morphology are placed in different chapters: *sweetest* under the ending *-est*, *best* under change of kernel, and *most natural* under the form-word *most*; but in syntax we have also to define what is meant by superlative, in whatever way formed, and delimit its use as against that of the comparative. These examples may illustrate the fact that the same form may serve for different functions, and that inversely the same function may correspond to different forms.

So far, however, we have spoken of two classes of categories only—forms (*a*), and functions (*b*). It remains to say something about the third class of categories, inner or notional meaning(*c*). In our analysis of grammatical phenomena we make use of such well-known terms as singular and plural, nominative, participle, infinitive, etc. Each of these terms denotes one function, but it is not always true that one and the same meaning is attached to the same function. Take, for instance, the imperative. In English, the formation of the imperative is simplicity itself, for the unchanged kernel or common form of the verb, which is also used for the infinitive and various other functions, serves as an imperative as well—e.g., “Go!” and “Take!” In other languages we have special endings, varying sometimes according to the person and number e.g., French *donne*, *donnons*, *donnez*), sometimes also according to the tense of the imperative (e.g., Latin *es*, *esto*). The meaning attached to the imperative may generally be stated to be a request, which may range from a command or order to those milder requests

which are expressed by such terms as demands, solicitations, invitations, injunctions, implorations, prayers, supplications, and offers—which of these is meant in each separate case is sometimes evident from the tone in which the imperative is spoken, sometimes from the words themselves or from the whole situation. But what concerns us here is that the two things, the function (imperative) and the meaning (request) do not cover the same ground: on the one hand we have requests that are not expressed by means of an imperative—e.g., “Hats off!” or “You will pack at once and leave this house!” or “Would you mind passing the salt!” etc. On the other hand we have imperatives without the meaning of a request—e.g., Hamlet’s “Use every man after his desert, and who should ‘scape whipping”, is equivalent to “if you use . . . .”

In some, though unfortunately not in all cases, it is possible neatly to keep syntactic function (*b*) and inner meaning (*c*) apart by means of different terms. Thus we have in Latin and German the syntactic category *gender* with the three subdivisions, masculine, feminine, and neuter, as distinct from the natural or notional category *sex*, where we distinguish between male, female, and sexless: masculine often corresponds to male, but there is no exact correspondence between the two categories, for we have, for instance, the feminine *die schildwache* (sentry) denoting a male being, the neuter *das weib* (woman) denoting a female being, and the masculine *der tisch* (table) and the feminine *die feder* (pen) denoting sexless things, and thus in innumerable other instances. Further, we have different grammatical tenses, but they correspond only roughly to the divisions of natural time, and it is therefore a pity that we are obliged to use the words *present* and *future* both of the tenses and of time: when it is specially important to keep the two things apart, we may, however, use the cumbersome terms *present tense*, *present time*, and similarly with *future*; thus we may say that the present tense is used to express not only present time, but also past time (as in the so-called historic present) and future time (as in “I start to-morrow”). Instead of using the term “past tense” I think it is better in English to talk of the *preterit*, for that allows us to say that the preterit is used not only to express the past, but also the present time as in expressions for the unreal—e.g., in “if

I had money enough" or "I wish I had money enough"; and even sometimes the future time—e.g., in "It is time he went to bed."

Now we are prepared to take up again the question whether it is desirable to have a grammar of function, not of form, and whether in that way we obtain a grammar that is valid for all languages. If we take "function" in the sense in which I have here taken it, this cannot be separated from form; form and function are inseparable and represent only two different sides from which to consider the same phenomena. Nor can function in that sense be said to be universal; it varies from language to language, though not to the same extent as the forms that serve to express it. Where English has one preterit, French has two, *imparfait* and *passé historique* (*passé défini*), and other languages have even more tenses, while Chinese verbs have no tense-distinction at all. Where Latin and German substantives have three genders, and French has two, English has no gender-distinction, though of course it does not lack means to express natural sex. Thus a grammar of functions in that sense is merely one aspect of the grammar we know so well from our own childhood.

But, it may be asked, would it not be possible to obtain a universal grammar by eliminating both form and what was here technically called function, and dealing with what has here been termed the inner meaning or notional categories, as these are admittedly common to all human thought and must therefore underlie all languages? Let us try to imagine what such a grammar of universal application would be like. In one chapter we should learn that there is a difference between one and more than one, but that this distinction cannot be applied to names like *gold* and *traffic* (mass-words); in another chapter we should hear that time naturally falls into the three main divisions, past, present, and future, and that in the past and in the future we may further distinguish between what was (or will be) before and what was (or will be) after some other point; in a third chapter we should be told that most living beings are either male or female, but that things are not so divided, etc. It would be hard to get beyond such truisms in a grammar that was truly universal and took no account of the forms actually found in various languages; conceived in this way pure grammar

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would be really poor grammar. It would be abstract and lifeless and have no practical value at all. It would be something like a zoölogy that treated all mammals alike, hiding away the differences between an elephant and a whale, a cat and a rat, a monkey and a dog, and carefully avoiding any reference to a cat's paws as different from a monkey's hands.

No, if grammar is to be real grammar, it must face the realities of life; we cannot teach grammar in the abstract, but we can and must teach English grammar, that is to say, the way in which English-speaking people express their thoughts and build up their sentences, and in order to do that we must take into account all three elements, forms and functions and inner meanings: otherwise there will be neither flesh nor blood to vivify our skeleton grammar.

The committee mentioned above recommend that "the terminology employed should be that common to the grammars of all languages, i.e., that recommended in the report of the Joint Committee on Grammatical Terminology." There is no doubt that the Terminology Committee has done highly meritorious work in reducing the previously existing chaos in terminology into something like a consistent system; it is evidently absurd to have a variety of names for the same things, but isn't it equally absurd to have the same name where the things are really different? Now that is just what I am afraid the Terminology Committee is sometimes guilty of; in their praiseworthy endeavours to use the same terms for all the languages taught in English schools they have sometimes exaggerated the similarities in the grammatical structures of these languages; to secure a uniform terminology, they have minimized or concealed very essential differences existing between these languages. Some of their grammatical teachings are equally reprehensible from a scientific and an educational point of view. This is notably true when they recognize five cases in English, viz., nominative, vocative, accusative, genitive, and dative. Thus we are told that English has the same system as German, and Latin (apart from the ablative). This seems to me totally wrong, for, with the exception of the genitive, none of these so-called cases have separate forms in English, while in German and Latin the

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cases differ in form. It is, however, said by those who defend the position of the Terminology Committee that cases denote categories of *meaning*, not categories of *form*, and that this is just as true of Latin grammar as it is of English grammar. The different cases of a Latin noun do not always differ from one another in form: the accusative of neuter nouns has always the same form as the nominative, all ablative plurals are the same in form as dative plurals, etc. All this is perfectly true, but it does not invalidate the view that the case distinctions of Latin grammar are primarily based on formal distinctions, to which different functions are attached. No one would have dreamed of postulating a Latin ablative case if it had not in many words been different from the dative. And where the two cases *are* identical in form, we are still justified in saying that we have now one, and now the other case, because other words in the same position show us which is used. We say that *Julio* is the dative in *do Julio librum*, but the ablative in *cum Julio*, because in the corresponding sentences with *Julia* we have different forms: *do Juliae librum*, *cum Julia*. *Templum* in some sentences is in the nominative, in others in the accusative, because in the first we should have the form *domus*, in the others the form *domum*. And thus in all the other instances. But in English it is quite otherwise; there is a fundamental incongruity between the Latin system where the case-distinctions are generally, though not always, expressed in form, and the English system where they are never thus expressed. To put the English accusative and dative, which are always identical in form, on the same footing as these two cases in Latin, which are different in more than 90 instances out of a hundred, is simply turning all scientific principles upside down.

If it is said that the difference between accusative and dative is one of meaning, we are entitled to ask the question: what is the particular meaning of the dative? But no answer has been forthcoming, and no answer can be given; no one can tell what the meaning of the dative is. If we look through the rules of any German, or Latin, or Greek grammar, thus in languages where we have distinct dative forms, we find in each a great variety of uses assigned to the dative, but many of them differ from one language to another, a fact easily understood if we take into account

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the way these languages have developed. If then we proceed to English and try to find out whether we have a dative or an accusative in this or that combination, we shall see that as soon as we step outside the "indirect object" where this is found by the side of a "direct object," as in "give the boy a shilling," no one can say which case is employed, e.g. in "help the boy," "hit the boy a blow," "ask the boy some questions," "call the boy bad names." One grammar says that in modern English all prepositions govern the accusative, and that we have the accusative, not the dative, in "I have been there three times". Both rules are perfectly arbitrary decrees without any reason either in the history of the language or in psychology or logic. The reason why no sensible answer can be given to such questions is the simple one that the dative is merely a *syntactic* category to which there is nothing corresponding in the realm of *notional* ideas. The dative belongs to the provinces A and B, but not to C in the scheme given above. Accordingly, there is no necessity for a language to possess a dative case, and hundreds of languages have either never had such a case or, if it formerly existed, have done away with it in course of time.

If "meaning" is decisive for the number of cases, then why not say that in "This morning I went that way" *way* is in the locative, and *morning* in the temporal case? Or that in "fight tooth and nail" we have an instrumental case? There are no end of cases in English if once we cease to take form into account.

Now an attempt has been made to prop up the case for all these cases in English grammar by an educational argument; it is said that the pupil who has mastered the uses of the five English cases will have little to learn when he comes to Latin, except that Latin has an extra case—the ablative. This means that part of the difficulty of Latin grammar is shifted over upon the English lessons. The subject in itself is not made easier even for those pupils who are going on with Latin afterwards; the only difference is that they have to learn part of it now at an earlier stage, before beginning Latin proper and in connection with a language where it is perhaps more difficult to understand because the memory has no support in tangible forms on which to fasten the functions. And what of all those pupils who are never to take up Latin? Is it really justi-



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fiable to burden every boy and girl of them with learning distinctions which will be of no earthly use to them in later life?

The recognition of all these cases without case-forms in English only serves to complicate simple matters; the grammarian's path is strewn with scores of insoluble difficulties when first he begins to put asunder what nature has joined together into one case: "nature" here means the natural, historical development of the English language, which has happily rid it of a great many of the useless complications which encumbered old English as well as the other cognate languages. The English (and Americans, for that matter) should rejoice at this simplification and be proud of the nobly simple structure of their language instead of trying to give five cases to English nouns, which can be achieved only through a gross falsification of scientific facts.

Everything that I have said so far may seem to be negative rather than positive, but it may serve as my excuse that sometimes it is necessary to remove weeds before sowing the new seed. And now I shall try to give a few hints of a more positive character as to what I should think the best way of teaching English grammar. It will already be gathered from my previous remarks that the grammar taught should be English grammar, concrete English grammar, not abstract grammar in the clouds. It should deal primarily with the children's own language and show them how that is constructed, and how it serves to express thoughts which the children can understand. They should be made consciously to see the rules they have already learned to follow unconsciously; and these rules should not be given to them as something to be learned by rote, but as far as possible they must be discovered by the pupils themselves under the guidance of the teacher: the inductive method here is absolutely to be preferred to the deductive method.

I have already mentioned phonetics as one vivifying element; here I must add that there are other vivifying elements to be found in the psychology of speech and in the history of the English language; the teacher should be in so far familiar with both that he will be able to select things which can serve to elucidate the pupils' everyday speech and make them take an intelligent interest in their own mother-tongue. Much can be done in that direction

without any learned apparatus and without many technical terms.

Any child can be made to understand the fundamental difference between formulas and free expressions, as I call them. Some things in any language are of the formula character; that is to say, no one can change anything in them. A phrase like "How do you do?" is entirely different from a sentence like "I gave the boy a lump of sugar." In the former everything is fixed, you cannot even change the stress saying "How *do* you do?" or change the person and tense into "How did he do?"; it is one fixed formula and has to be handled as such, whereas free expressions can be changed according to circumstances: you can say "I gave the girl a shilling" or "he will give his wife a new hat," etc. You may take any word out of a free expression and substitute another one. And there the activity, the language-creating activity, of the individual, comes in.

Any sentence except those that are fixed formulas has to be created at the moment by the speaker, who therein has to utilize certain types of linguistic structure which he has acquired from what he has heard before. The distinction between formulas and free expressions pervades the whole field of language, single forms of words as well as sentence-construction. Irregular forms are such as are handed down traditionally from generation to generation, while regular forms may be created afresh any moment, without the speaker or anyone else knowing at the moment whether he has ever heard the same form before or is just now creating it on the spur of the moment on the analogy of many other forms.

One of the first elementary lessons in English grammar will have to deal with the difference between one and more than one, and for this distinction it will be necessary to teach the words singular and plural. But if you have a little story printed in such a way that all the substantives are in italics, it will be easy to go through it so as to make the children find out for themselves which words are in the singular, and which in the plural; with each singular you ask what the plural would be, and vice versa. It would not be difficult to tabulate the various ways of forming the plural, and to see that the regular way is by adding *s*—the threefold character of this ending according to the final sound of the word can easily be explained by means of elementary phonetics. Irregu-

lar plurals may be roughly classified, and the pupils may be asked to think of further examples besides those found in the little text chosen as the basis of this lesson. I think that it may even be useful at an early stage to mention the way in which English has here developed into a simpler system; without teaching the class Old English it will be possible just to give a few examples of older forms, and point out that some words have retained traces of this more complicated system—the very words that the pupils have found out to be “irregular”, words like *men*, *women*, *oxen*, *children*. The class will then be prepared for such a question as this: “Why do you think that just these words, and not other words, are irregularly inflected?” The pupil will see that these words are the most ordinary words, the plurals of which are heard very frequently in everyday use, much more frequently than the plurals of such words as *kodak*, *bishop*, or *substance*, and he will easily understand that any child in acquiring his mother-tongue will hear such forms as *men* or *children* much more often and learn them at an earlier stage than the plurals of such words as *oak* or *book* or *friend*: these latter formerly had irregular plurals of the same type as *men*, i.e., without -s, but they were not used frequently enough to be always remembered, and so people were liable to form new plurals on the type most frequently used exactly as when now we hear a new word for the first time—e.g., *gadget* or *aeroplane*—we instinctively form its plural in accordance with the vast majority of other words, i.e., regularly. A few remarks on such points here and there will make the children understand what language is really, and make them see that it depends for its “life” on being learned afresh by each new generation.

The next step after recognizing *s* as the regular way of forming plurals will be to take the same ending as a mark of the genitive. This too may be taught inductively and offers no special difficulty. But here we may take the opportunity to point out that our grammatical means are sometimes insufficient. For if the same ending (phonetically the same, though spelled in different ways) serves both to mark the plural (e.g., *princes*) and the genitive (e.g., *prince's*), what do we do when we want to express the genitive plural? The pupil will find out that this is simple enough in such

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cases as *men's*, *women's*, *children's*, but that otherwise we have only the same *s*, and that therefore such a combination as "the prince's carriage" is ambiguous in the spoken language, because it may be taken either as a singular or as the plural (written *prince's* and *princes'* respectively): accordingly it is quite natural that there should be a great tendency to use the combination with *of* instead; you may read through a hundred pages of any English novel without finding more than one or two genitive plurals in *s'*. So here the very simple system of having the same ending for two purposes breaks down and has to be supplemented by other means.

One point which is treated very inadequately in most English grammars, but which might offer some extremely instructive lessons, is word-order. Sometimes word-order is quite fixed, and we have a sort of formula; at other times it depends on the will of the speaker and may be utilized for stylistic purposes, and finally it is extensively used as a grammatical means. All this might be shown profitably by means of carefully selected examples, and the interaction of word-order and other grammatical means would form an interesting chapter. Let me mention briefly one little point just to show the spirit in which I should like to see grammar treated in schools. A distinction is made between "he had made the shoes" and "he had the shoes made", the place of the object being decisive for the meaning of the sentence. But this breaks down when for one reason or another we have to place the object in the beginning of the sentence, as when it is an interrogative or relative pronoun. Here, then, it would seem that "the shoes which he had made" must be ambiguous. But an intelligent pupil will discover for himself, or at any rate will understand when it is pointed out to him, that there is another means of making the difference clear, namely stress, *had* being unstressed and run together with *I* in one sense, but not in the other. There are a great many neat little things of that order, which are scarcely mentioned in the ordinary grammars, because these are all more or less made on the pattern of grammars of dead languages known only from books, and therefore leave out many things which can be discovered by the ear only.

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I have here necessarily had to content myself with throwing out a few hints, but I hope they will be sufficient to indicate in the broadest outline how I could imagine that the cloud of depression which has long hovered over grammar lessons might be lifted, and how the subject might be made more profitable. The grammar which I advocate may not be universal grammar, and may not even be pure grammar, but at any rate it is real grammar, living grammar, the grammar of the real, living English language.

—*The English Journal*, 1924.

## WHAT IS THE USE OF PHONETICS?

By phonetics is meant the science of speech sounds, their production by means of lips, tongue, palate, and vocal chords, their acoustic qualities, their combination into syllables and other sound groups, and finally quantity, stress, and intonation. Phonetics thus may be called that part of linguistic science which deals with the outward aspect of language as opposed to the inner or psychological side of language, or it may be looked upon as that part of physics and of physiology which deals specially with sounds as used by human beings to communicate thoughts and feelings to one another. Among those who have contributed to the development of phonetic science we find physicists like Helmholtz, physiologists like Brücke, and philologists like Sievers, Storm, and Sweet.

But what is the use of this science of speech sounds? Before attempting to answer this question I must be permitted to say that such a question in itself is not a scientific question. The true man of science pursues his inquiries without asking at every point about the use of examining this or that. A zoologist will not be deterred from examining the habits of ants or the muscular structure of their hindlegs by the cry of the man in the street that it is no use knowing all these things; he will go on patiently observing his animals in exactly the same conscientious and laborious way as if each little step in advance meant so much money saved or gained for mankind, or so much food for the poor. The truly scientific mind does not ask about profit or use, but tries by every accessible means to add to human knowledge and to our intelligent understanding of the wonderful world that surrounds us.

Still, the question about utility is not quite futile; only it should not be urged in the first place, and it should never stand in the way of scientific research, however useless it may seem in the eyes of

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the uninitiated. Science *is* useful ; but often it is so in a roundabout and indirect way. When my countryman Oersted discovered that an electric current influenced the movements of a magnetic needle, he made a great step forward in science. He immediately saw the immense importance of his discovery for our knowledge of the great mystical powers of electricity and magnetism ; he did not stop to ask himself about the practical usefulness of such knowledge ; his concern was exclusively with the theoretical side of the question, and joyfully he sent out the message to his brother scientists that here was one important problem solved. But then, *your* countryman<sup>1</sup> Morse seized upon this theoretical discovery and turned it to practical account : the electric telegraph came into existence, and everybody saw the use of Oersted's discovery. In the same manner purely scientific investigations may unexpectedly lead to some great practical result : the observation of the habits of mosquitoes leads to the diminution of malaria and other diseases, and research work in chemistry may eventually benefit mankind in some way not at all anticipated by the original initiator.

Practical usefulness thus often comes in at the back door, tho it should not be our primary object in scientific pursuits. But on the other hand, if it is possible to point out some practical advantages, this can do no harm, and may even be valuable in inducing people to take up some line of study which has not hitherto been thought necessary to average students. And this applies with especial force to phonetics, which, besides presenting great interest to the inquisitive spirit, offers also no inconsiderable practical advantage to the student.

The teacher of foreign languages will find that a thoro knowledge of the essentials of phonetics will be extremely helpful to him in his classroom. Everybody knows the manner in which corrections of pronunciation were generally made in old-fashioned classes, and how they are still made by too many teachers, even among those who have themselves acquired a good pronunciation of the language they are teaching. The pupil reads some word in some miserably

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<sup>1</sup> This lecture was given in September, 1909, at Columbia University as the first of a series on practical and theoretical phonetics.

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erroneous way, the teacher stops him and pronounces the word in, let us assume, the correct way. The pupil tries to imitate that pronunciation, but fails, and thus we have an endless repetition of the same word by the teacher, followed very often on the part of the pupil by an equally endless repetition of nearly the same bad pronunciation as before, tempered as often as not by mistakes in the opposite direction, the pupil shooting over the mark where before he had shot below the mark. By dint of enormous patience much may no doubt be achieved in this way; but the way is long and laborious, and so tedious that generally all attempts are given up after some time, with no visible result except that of some precious time lost to both parties concerned. How different, if the teacher knows his business, that is to say, knows enough of phonetics to be able to tell the pupil just exactly what is the difference between the sound as he pronounced it and the sound as it should be. Then he is able to strike at the root of the evil, chiefly thru an isolation of both sounds concerned: he pronounces them long and distinct by themselves, without any sounds before or after which are apt to bewilder the ear by diverting the attention from the sounds themselves, and then he shows how the difference of impression which it is now easy to appreciate, is produced by shifting the tongue a little forward or backward, or by voicing the sound, or whatever the mistake in question may be. He has here to give a few explanations which are theoretical, to be sure, but of the kind that appeal at the same time to the practical instinct of the pupils and can be made interesting and attractive. A simple drawing on the black-board, a look into a hand-mirror, a little experimenting with your fingers, and there you are: the sound that appeared so difficult to appreciate is now understood in its mechanism, and the practise needed to possess it for ever is nothing but a kind of play, which is felt to be just as enjoyable as learning how to whistle or to play other tricks with one's mouth is to the average child.

When I began to teach French and English in Copenhagen, it was a kind of dogma there that --as one of the chief school authorities seriously informed me in a public discussion--there were certain sounds, such as the soft *s* in French and English, which no normal Danish tongue was ever able to produce, and that it was therefore



necessary for us to confuse *seal* and *zeal*, *ice* and *eyes*, etc. It was no use at that time for me to tell him that the difficulty in question had nothing whatever to do with the tongue, but depended entirely on the vocal chords, and that as a matter of fact I had succeeded in teaching a whole class to pronounce correctly the sound in question, the voiced [z] as I prefer to call it. But I am glad to say that the same skeptic has since been completely converted, and that now he insists that all the language masters of his school teach their pupils the correct pronunciation and employment of this very important sound.

The sounds of [y]<sup>2</sup> as in French *vu* or German *über* and [ö] as in French *veut* or German *höhe* present difficulties for English-speaking pupils who are inclined to imitate the two sounds by means of some diphthong or combination like that found in English *view*. It is best to practise these two sounds together, and it is easiest to learn them in their long form: on the whole it will be a good thing for the teacher to pronounce any new sound, whether consonant or vowel, as long as possible to the pupils in order to familiarize the ears of the pupils with it. That it is not impossible to learn these sounds of [y] and [ö] was brought home to me some years ago in a striking manner. These sounds are also found in Danish; an English-speaking lady who had been in Denmark for some years had not been able, in spite of unceasing efforts, to learn them by imitation. Then I made a bet that I could teach her to pronounce them in less than ten minutes, and I won the bet thru five minutes' theoretical explanation of rounded and unrounded vowels, and two minutes' practical exercises. The directions were about as follows: say [uː] as in *too* very loudly, and hold it as long as you can without taking breath. Once more: observe in the hand-mirror the position of the lips. Then say *tea* [tiː] in the same way; draw the vowel until you can hold it no longer; continue all the time to observe the position of the lips in the mirror. Now [uːː] again; then [iːː]—one dot in my phonetic transcription indicates the usual quantity of a long vowel, and three dots an unusually lengthened vowel. The lips are rounded for some vowels, slit shaped for others. Try to pout them rather

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<sup>2</sup> Phonetic transcription should always be given within brackets.

more than you do usually. Pronounce [u<sup>'''</sup>] a couple of times with the lips rounded and as close to each other as possible, and concentrate your attention on the lips. Then say [i<sup>'''</sup>] a few times, paying attention to the position of the tongue; you will feel that the sides of the tongue touch the roof of the mouth or the teeth. Now look in the mirror: say [i<sup>'''</sup>] again, and now suddenly, taking care to keep the tongue in the same position, let your lips take the rounded, pouted position they had before. If the pupil is still unable to produce [y] because he involuntarily shifts his tongue-position back again to the familiar [u]-position, the teacher passes on to the second part of the experiment, which is surer, and might therefore have been taken first: place your lips in this pouted [u]-position, without producing any sound, look in the mirror, and be very careful that the position of the lips remains unchanged, and then try to say [i<sup>'''</sup>]. If the tongue is placed in the correct position for [i] as in *tea*, the result can not be anything else but a [y]. This sound is retained and repeated until the pupil is perfectly sure of both the articulation and the acoustic effect. Then the sound [ö] may be taken up. It may be produced with [y] as a starting-point, the jaw being lowered together with both the lower lip and the tongue, while the teacher takes care to stop the downward movement in the right place. The result may be checked by starting from [e] as in French *fée* or German *see*, and rounding the lips, that is, by going thru a process corresponding to the transition from [i<sup>'''</sup>] to [y<sup>'''</sup>]. I may add that I was glad a few days ago to meet the same lady again in New York, and to find that in speaking Danish she used perfectly correct [y] and [ö] sounds in spite of having been absent from Denmark for some years.

The teacher who devotes a few hours at the outset to the study of the sounds found in the foreign language he is going to teach<sup>3</sup> will find that it pays, because it saves him very much time later and permits him to give his time later on more exclusively to the higher branches of the study, idiom, literary expression, and so forth. He will find, besides, that the better his pupils' pronunciation is, the

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<sup>3</sup> See for the method of such initial elementary instruction in phonetics my book *How to Teach a Foreign Language*, p. 145 ff. (Sonnenschein, Macmillan Company).

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better will they be able to appreciate the esthetic side of the language as a whole, the style of various authors, etc. As a matter of fact, whoever does not possess a foreign language well enough to hear it in his mind's ear as the native does, will never be able to appreciate the higher forms of a foreign literature, whether in prose or in poetry.

If, thus, a little phonetics is useful, or shall I say indispensable, to the teacher of foreign languages, it is so, too, to the teacher of the mother tongue. He also has often to contend with imperfect articulations and vices of pronunciation in his pupils; he, too, will find that mistakes which at first he was inclined to attribute to organic defects, or which from other reasons he thought ineradicable, are really due to the fact that the child has never been taught how to make proper use of the organs a bountiful Nature has given to him as well as to the rest of us, and that a few explanations of the same kind as that hinted at above, together with a little systematic practise, will generally do wonders. And then think of those numerous cases in which the "mother tongue" taught at school is really more or less of a foreign language to all or some of the children of a class, because their home language is either some dialect of the same language, or else some other language, as is largely the case in New York and other cities in the United States.

School authorities in various countries are now beginning to see the importance of phonetics, and to require it as part of the ordinary equipment of a teacher. In Denmark familiarity with phonetics (and phonetic writing) is now required from any one who wishes to obtain a teacher's certificate in any of the modern languages, either at or out of the university; but unfortunately it is not yet required of the teachers in elementary schools. But in England and Scotland the necessity of some training in the theory and practise of speech sounds has recently been recognized as part of the normal training of all teachers in primary schools.

Now, there is one class of teachers who have even more need of phonetics than other teachers of language, namely the deaf-and-dumb teachers. Some of the earliest descriptions of the organic positions required for speech sounds are due to the first pioneers in the difficult art of teaching deaf-mutes to speak in the same way as hearing

persons do, and now it is everywhere considered as a matter of course that the teacher of articulation and of lip-reading (or, better, mouth-reading) in schools for the deaf-and-dumb must be thoroly familiar with theoretical and practical phonetics. There is no necessity for enlarging upon that subject.

I therefore pass on to another field where advantages are likely to accrue from a more extended knowledge of phonetics. The question of spelling reform is a burning one in all civilized countries. Not only in English, but also in French, in German, in Danish, in Swedish, in Russian, and to a much lesser degree in Italian and Spanish, do we find numerous instances of words spelt otherwise than pronounced, of mute and superfluous or ambiguous letters. Everywhere the educated classes have more or less systematically for the last few centuries been doing everything in their power to prevent that readjustment of spellings to sounds that is indispensable if the written language is to remain, or is again to become, what it was everywhere to begin with, a tolerably faithful picture of the spoken language. The present situation is one of a clumsy and difficult system of spelling that causes a miserable loss of time in all schools (and out of schools, too); much valuable time which might be used profitably in many other ways, is spent upon learning that this word has to be spelt in this absurd manner, and that word in another equally absurd way, and why? For no other apparent reason than that such has been the custom of a couple of centuries or more.<sup>4</sup> Each new generation keeps up faithfully nearly all the absurdities of the preceding one, and as each new generation is bound to change the pronunciation of some sounds and of some words, the gulf between the spoken and the written word is constantly widening, and the difficulty of learning how to spell is ever growing greater and greater. Now I know very well that it is not every phonetician who is a spelling reformer tho a great many are; but what I do maintain is, in the first place, that only a good phonetician can show what is to be reformed and what is to be the direction of change, because he

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<sup>4</sup> Of course, there are *historical* reasons for the caprices of spelling, but they make them no more reasonable from the point of view of the *present-day* speller; I have studied them in detail in my *Modern English Grammar*, vol. I. *Sounds and Spellings* (Winter, Heidelberg, 1909; in New York at Stechert's).

alone knows what sounds to represent and how best to represent them. Sweden had an excellent reform of some points of their spelling a couple of years ago, because in that country a great many prominent phoneticians, such as Lundell, Noreen, Tegnér, Wulff, had some years previously in a series of valuable books and papers threshed out all problems connected with spelling from the philological, historical, and pedagogical points of view. And it would be well if other countries were soon to follow the example set by that small nation. With regard to English, a great deal of extremely valuable theoretical work and practical experimenting was done in the eighties of last century by excellent scholars and phoneticians, Ellis, Sweet, Evans, Skeat, and others, most of it to be found in the Transactions of the Philological Society of London, and I am glad to see that now the Simplified Spelling Board in this country and the Simplified Spelling Society in England are beginning to spread useful information with regard to spelling. I wish them every possible success for the benefit of the English-writing world and of mankind at large.

But in the second place I maintain that a *thoro* reform of the spelling of any civilized nation does not only presuppose a small set of energetic phoneticians who have investigated all the odds and ends of the subject, but will not be possible till the day when the general public have given up what I should call their all-pervading superstition in these matters, their irrational belief that the spelling of words has been settled once for all, as if by some divine command, and that any deviation from the traditional spelling is either ridiculous or else an infallible symptom of low breeding. Much of that superstition will break down when people get accustomed to seeing old authors spelt in the orthography of their own times; I think it is a great pity that Shakspeare is now nearly always reprinted in and read in the spelling of the nineteenth century instead of in that of the old editions. Much would also be achieved if scholars of renown, philologists, students of literature, and writers of books in general, would indulge in some individual spellings, one in this class of words, and another in some other class. These individual spellings need not be very numerous, nor should they be necessarily consistent, and the author need not give any other reason for his special heterodoxies than that they just suit his fancy. This would educate readers by

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showing them that different spellings need not always be marks of illiteracy, and that there may exist difference of opinions in this as well as in other respects without any fear of human society falling at once to pieces on that account.

But still more will result when some elementary understanding of what language is, and especially of the relation between sounds and letters has spread much more universally than is now the case. Some little knowledge of the nature of heat and the construction of a thermometer is presupposed in every man and woman of any but the lowest standard of education, but in spite of the fact that many, perhaps most, lessons in all schools are really language lessons, very little has been done hitherto to make school children understand the mechanism of speech, tho we possess really in our vocal organs an apparatus much more wonderful and much more interesting than the most ingenious steam engine ever invented.

I am, however, inclined to think that the radical spelling reform I am hoping for, will be brought about not so much thru a diffusion of phonetic science proper as by one of its accessories, namely phonetic symbolization. Any science needs some more or less conventional symbols; the mathematician has his +, and -, and  $\sqrt{\quad}$ , the chemist has his letters and formulas, etc., and similarly the phonetician must have his signs and symbols to denote sounds and their relations. The ordinary Roman alphabet may certainly be used, but on one condition only, namely that the same letter has to stand everywhere for the same sound. To teach phonetics, or indeed to speak of language at all, would be completely impossible were we to use nothing but the ordinary spelling (*cat*, *car*, *care*, *cent*, etc. etc.). This has been compared to teaching arithmetic by means of Roman numerals; but the comparison is false, for it would obviously be possible to carry on even complicated calculations by means of Roman numerals, because they have everywhere the same value. But dealing intelligibly with sounds as represented in the ordinary spelling is manifestly as impossible as it would be to teach arithmetic by means of a system in which one numeral were to stand sometimes for the value nine, sometimes for thirteen, sometimes for two, and sometimes for nothing at all. Or what would you say about a musical notation in which the same note at different positions in different bars had quite

different values without anything to show its value at each place. We must evidently in phonetics have some kinds of consistent notation, even if we might perhaps limit ourselves to exacting consistency only in the same book or in the same transcribed text. Many different systems have been advocated and employed, partly owing to the different purposes for which phonetic transcription has been used, but tho complete unity of notation has not yet been arrived at among phoneticians, it is fair to say that there is now much less diversity in this respect than in previous decades. The system of the international Association Phonétique, as developed in the monthly *Le maître phonétique*, on the basis of the work of Sweet and others, is evidently gaining ground in most countries, and tho many scholars do not accept it in all minute details, the general principles and the great majority of special characters are now practically adopted by most of those who are entitled to a vote in the matter. Without entering into a detailed argument on this very difficult subject, I shall here only say that there are, roughly speaking, three degrees of exactitude in phonetic writing: one for the highest scientific use, requiring a great many special symbols; another for ordinary work in describing and teaching a foreign language, in which some new letters, tho not very many, are needed; and finally, a very simple phonetic system with few if any new letters, suitable for a very easy transcription for natives who are already familiar with the sounds represented. It is the last system only which can serve as a basis for the spelling reform of the future, and it will probably do so thru being used for a totally different purpose, namely that of teaching small children to read to their own mother tongue.

I may at some future time have an opportunity of reverting to the method of teaching children to read by first having them read some kind of simple, easy, phonetic writing. Here I shall only say that experiments made in various countries, in England fifty years ago by Alexander J. Ellis and later by Miss L. Soames, in Norway by August Western, in Alsace by J. Spieser, in France by Paul Passy, and in Denmark by myself, have shown that a child who does not begin by being introduced to all the bewildering entanglements of the ordinary spelling, but who learns first to read and to write words spelt *consistently* without regard to orthodox orthography, will

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learn both this simplified writing, and after that the usual spelling much more rapidly and much more securely than if he had begun at once with the usual spelling. This is a result which astonishes most educators, altho the psychological reasons for the success of this seemingly round-about method are not far to seek ; but instead of trying to give a short and therefore necessarily inadequate description of the method to be employed, I will rather break off here for the present, summing up my arguments by saying that to every and any teacher concerned with language in one form or another, whether the pupils' own or a foreign tongue, phonetic science is desirable, nay indispensable, and that the language teacher of the future must know something about the production of speech sounds, such knowledge being as necessary to him as it is to the teacher of geography to understand what longitude and latitude means.

If I have not said a word about theoretical philologists, students of the history of languages, or those who try to reduce unwritten languages or dialects to writing, the reason is that here everybody can see at once the fundamental value of the study of phonetics ; what I wanted to emphasize in this paper was only the enormous practical usefulness of the science of speech sounds and its bearing on education in general.

—*Educational Review*, February, 1910.





## SYMBOLIC VALUE OF THE VOWEL *i*<sup>1</sup>

### § 1. INTRODUCTION

SOUND symbolism plays a greater role in the development of languages than is admitted by most linguists. In this paper I shall attempt to show that the vowel [i], high-front-unround, especially in its narrow or thin form, serves very often to indicate what is small, slight, insignificant, or weak.

In children the instinctive feeling for the value of sounds is more vivid than in adults, hence we have the extreme instance observed by G. v. d. Gabelentz in one of his nephews, who said *lakeil* for an ordinary chair, *lukul* for a big easy-chair, and *likil* for a tiny doll's chair; he had the root *m-m* for everything round: the moon or a plate was *mem*, a large round dish was *mom* or *mum*, but the stars were *mim-mim-mim-mim*. When his father appeared before him in a big fur-coat, he did not say *papa*, but *pupu*. (*Die Sprachwissensch.* 65). In exactly the same way a child in Lund (Sweden) called his father *poppo* (*o* a close sound between *o* and *u*), when he saw him in a great-coat. Beckman, who relates this (*Språkpsyk. och Modernism.*, Lund 1899, 60) believes in influence from the adjective *stor* [stør]. A Danish child who had heard the word *himmel* 'sky', took it to mean the little twinkling stars and made it a plural [hi-mæ].

"An American boy, Granville Gilbert by name, had up till the age of four a language of his own, which he persisted in using instead

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[<sup>1</sup> In the periodical *Philologica* vol. I, London and Prague 1922. Reprinted in "Meisterwerke der romanischen sprachwissenschaft" I, herausgeg. v. I. Spitzer, München 1929. The whole may be considered an expansion of ch. XX § 8 in my book *Language* (German *Die Sprache*), which was written at the same time. The other sections of that chapter might be similarly expanded, but I must leave that for the present.—Here reprinted with a few unimportant alterations and many additions.—Some interesting psychological experiments were carried out in 1928 by F. Sapro, showing that most individuals were inclined to associate the vowel *a* with 'large' and *i* with 'small' in arbitrarily chosen meaningless combinations of sounds, etc.; see *Journal of Experimental Psychology*, vol. 12, June 1929.]

of English. His word for little was *i-i* (ee-ee), and his word for big was *o-o*" (Sir Richard Paget, "Babel", London 1930, p. 38).

In the first chapter of his "Arne" Bjornson renders the laughter of the brooklet, as it grows gradually in size and power, as "hi, hi, hi"—"ha, ha, ha"—"ho, ho, ho".

Swift was aware of the symbolic value of vowels when he called the land of dwarfs *Lilliput* and that of giants *Brobdignag*; Gulliver in the latter place was called *Grildrig*: "the word imports what the Latins call *nanunculus*" (a very small dwarf).

According to Gabelentz (l. c. 222) Batta has three words for 'kriechen': *džanan* in general, *džirir* for small beings, and *džurur* for big animals or animals one is afraid of. (Query: what is the exact difference between E. *crawl* and *crawl*?)

Nor is the influence of sound-symbolism restricted to children and savages, even modern scientists and suffragists are under its spell. French chemists made *sulphate* into *sulphite*, and *nitrate* into *nitrite*, "intending by the substitution of the thin sounding (*i*) to indicate a less degree of chemical action" (Sweet, *Hist. of Language* 37). F. N. Scott writes: "A considerable number of persons hate the plural form *women*, as being weak and whimpering, though the sg. *woman* connotes for the same persons ideas of strength and nobility. It is for this reason perhaps that *woman's building*, *woman's college*, *woman's club*, and the like, have supplanted in popular speech the forms *women's building*, *women's college*, &c". (Quoted in my *Mod. Engl. Grammar* II. 7-42, where, however, similar formations with other genitival compounds are pointed out, in which there can be no question of sound-symbolism)

One summer, when there was a great drought at Fredriksstad (Norway), the following words were posted in a W.C. "Don't pull the string for bummelim, only for bummelum". This was immediately understood

The reason why the sound [i] comes to be easily associated with small, and [u, o, a] with bigger things, may be to some extent the high pitch of the vowel (in some African languages a high tone is used for small, and a low tone for big things, Meinhof, *Die mod. Sprachforsch. in Afrika*, 81); the perception of the small lip aperture in one case and the more open mouth in the other may have also its

share in the rise of the idea. Sir R. Paget accounts for the above-mentioned boy's words as gesture words, "since *i-i* is made by pushing the tongue forward and upward so as to make the smallest cavity between the tongue front and the lips, while *o-o* or *aw-aw*, etc., are the results of a lowered tongue, producing a large mouth cavity.' A concomitant reason is the simple fact that small birds produce a sound resembling the human [*i*]: they *peep*, while big animals *roar*—cf. also *clink* and *clank* as the sound of small and big metallic bodies being struck together.

In giving lists<sup>1</sup> of words in which the [*i*] sound has the indicated symbolic value, I must at once ask the reader to beware of two possible misconceptions: first, I do not mean to say that the vowel [*i*] *always* implies smallness, or that smallness is *everywhere* indicated by means of that vowel; no language is consistent in that way, and it suffices to mention the words *big* and *small*, or the fact that *thick* and *thin* have the same vowel, to show how absurd such an idea would be.

Next, I am not speaking of the origin or etymology of the words enumerated: I do not say that they have from the very first taken their origin from a desire to express small things symbolically. It is true that I believe that *some* of the words mentioned have arisen in that way,—many of our *i*-words are astonishingly recent—but for many others it is well-known that the vowel *i* is only a recent development, the words having had some other vowel in former times. What I maintain, then, is simply that there is some association between sound and sense in these cases, however it may have taken its origin, and however late this connexion may be (exactly as I think that we must recognize secondary echoisms). But I am firmly convinced that the fact that a word meaning little or little thing contains the sound [*i*], has in many, or in most, cases been strongly influential in gaining popular favour for it; the sound has been an inducement to choose and to prefer that particular word, and to drop out of use other words for the same notion, which were not so favoured. In other words, sound-symbolism makes some words more fit to survive and

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<sup>1</sup> My lists are not the result of systematic search through vocabularies, but comprise only such words as I have come across during the time in which I have paid attention to the subject.

gives them a considerable strength in their struggle for existence. If you want to use some name of an animal for a small child, you will preferably take one with sound symbolism, like *kid* or *chick* (see § 3), rather than *bat* or *pug* or *slug*, though these may in themselves be smaller than the animal chosen.

In this way languages become richer and richer in symbolic words. I do not believe in a golden first age in which everything in language was expressive and had its definite significative value, but rather in a slow progressive tendency towards fuller and easier and more adequate expressions (also emotionally more adequate expressions) —and in this movement the increasing number of sound-symbolisms forms to my mind a not inconsiderable element.

## § 2. WORDS FOR LITTLE

I include here also words for ideas like 'insignificant, weak, puny', which cannot be separated from 'little'.

*Little*, Goth. *leitils*, ON. *litill*, Dan. *lille*, &c. On the vowel and on the form *leetle* see § 7. It is worth noting that *little* is the emotional word, while *small* is a more objective or colourless expression for the same quality.

*Tiny*, formerly also *tine*, in Shakespeare always in the connexion *little tine*. From a sb.: Lydgate a *little tyne* 'a little bit' from OFr. *tinee* 'a tubful', derived from *tine* 'tub' (Skeat, but see NED. *tine* adj. and *tiny*). On the pronunciation and the spelling *teeny* see § 7.

L. W. Payne, *Word-List from East Alabama* (1909) gives several variants: *teenincy* [tɪˈnainsi], *tincy* [tɪnsi], *teentsy-weentsy*, *teeny-weeny*, *tintsy*, *tintsy-wintsy*, *tinchy*, *teenchy*, Cf. also EDD. *tinsy-winsy*, *tinny*, *tinny-wimmy*, *tiny-winy*, *tiddy*, *tidney*, *tiddy-iddy*, *tiddly*.

*Wee*, esp. Sc.

*Weeny*, also Sc., a blend of *tiny* and *wee*, e. g. Barrie, *Tommy and Grizel* 396, Locke *The Wonderf. Year* 25, McKenna *Midas* 127 "make things just the weeniest bit easier", Galsworthy *Mob* 26 "tell me just one weeny thing". In Ireland expanded: "a *weeny deeny dawny* little atomy of an idea of a small taste of a gentleman" Joyce, *Engl. as we speak it in Irel.* 132.)—*Teeny weeny*, § 7.

*Little bitsy*, *little bitty* (Payne, Alabama).

*Mimminy-pimminy*, also *nimminy-pimminy* or *wimmeny-pim-meney*.

*Minikin* (thy m. mouth, Shakesp. Lr. III. 6. 45). Cf. § 3.

*Skimpy*, *scrimp* 'thin, stinted or stunted'.

*Flimsy*, supposed to be from *filmsy*.

*Slim* (oldest quotation 1657, connexion with Dutch or LG. *slim*, G. *schlimm* doubtful).

*Slinky* 'narrowed' (Galsw., Sw. Song 131 his dark s. eyes).

*Spindly* 'little, weak' (id., White Monkey 180).

*Piddling* 'small' (Milton, Ar. 39 p. accounts; Walpole, Wintersmoon 582 torrents have been p. brooks).

*Piffing* 'of no account', e. g. Lewis M. Arrowsmith 438; cf. *piffle* 'nonsense'.

*Pimping* 'small, trifling, sickly', from 1687, of uncertain origin, cf. Du. *pimpel* 'weak little man', G. *pimpelig* 'effeminate' NED.

*Pink* as one of its significations has 'little'; Scotch *pinkie*.

*Jim*, Sc. 'neat ... slender'.

In Somerset: a little *skiddley* bit o' bird'n cheese.

*Peaky*, *peeky*, *peeking*, 'sickly, feeble, puny'.

*Sis* 'effeminate', U. S., e. g. Lewis, Main St. 337.

*Infinitesimal*.

Note how many of the synonyms given in Roget's *Thesaurus* for 'unimportant' (643) have, or have had, the sound [i]—the latter here put within parentheses: (*trifling*), *trivial*, (*slight*, *light*), *flimsy*, *frivolous*, *niggling*, *piddling*, *fribble*, *finical*, *finikm*, *fiddle-fuddle*, *fingle-fangle*, *wishy-washy*, *mean*, *meagre*, *weedy*, *niggardly*.

Note also similes like: no bigger than a *pease*, than a *pin*'s head, as little as *ninepins*, as small as *meeze*, as big as a *bee*'s *knee*, ez larl (little) ez *fleabite*—all taken from T. H. Svartengren, *Intensifying Similes in Engl.*, Lund 1918.

Dan. *bitte*, in standard pronunciation generally with narrow [i], in Jutland most often with [e]. Often combined with *lille*.

Orkney and Shetl. *pini* 'little', Norw. dial. *pirre*. Faeroe *pirra* 'little thing'.

G. *gering*, Dan. *ringe*.

G. *winzig*.

Lat. *minor*, *minimus*.

Lat. *micidus* 'very small'.

It. *piccino*, *piccin piccino*, *piccolo*.

Fr. *petit*.

Fr. *chetif*, in dialects with the fem. *chetite*, evidently on the analogy of *petite*.

Sp. *chico*, cf. § 3; Catalan *xic*, *chic* 'little, of little worth'.

Ruman. *mic* 'little' (from the following?).

Gr. *smikrós*, *mikrós*. Note the contrast *makrós* 'long'.

Gr. *oligos*.

Finnic *pikku*.

Esthon. *pisikene* 'little'.

Magy. *kis*, *kicsiny*, comparative *kisebb*.

Magy. *csiribini* 'very little' with several variants, see Lewy, *Zur finnisch-ugr. Wort- u. Satzverbindung* 84.

Eskimo (Greenl.) *mikirsoq* 'small', *mikivok* 'is small', also with other forms: *mikike*, *mikingit*.

Jap. *tiisai* (*chi-*) 'little', *tito* 'a little'.

Chinese 'tit' 'tit' (D. Jones and Kwing Tong Woo, *A Cantonese Phonetic Reader* 13).<sup>1</sup>

### § 3. WORDS FOR CHILD OR YOUNG ANIMAL

Names for the young of animals are often applied, more or less jocularly, to children, thus in E. *kud*, *chick*, *kitten*, *piggy*.

*Child*.

*Imp* (obs. in the sense 'young shoot of plant', now == 'child, esp. mischievous child, little demon').

*Chit* 'little girl'; e. g. Goldsmith *Vic*. 1. 83.

*Tutter* 'little girl', a tramp's term, Hotten in Farmer & Henley.

*Tit* 'anything small' also 'little girl', *ibid*.

*Kimbin*, old slang 'child'.

*Minkin*, endearing word for small woman, also adj. 'delicate',

<sup>1</sup> There are some adjectival notions which cannot very well be kept apart from that of 'small' and are also often symbolized by the same vowel. *fine*, Fr. *chic*, 'smart' (adopted into other languages, supposed to be from *chicane*), Sc. *dink* 'finely dressed', E. *trim*, U S *nifty* 'smart, stylish', Dan *fix* 'smart in dress', Fr. *mignon*, E. *finical* and *finikin* 'over-fastidious'. Note also *timate* 'make smart or spruce', also *tiddyrate*, *odd*, *up*.

from MDu. *minnekijn*, *-ken* 'little love', cf. *mignon*. Also extended *minnikin-finikin*, or *-finical*.

*A slip* of a boy.

*Stripling*.

*Snippet* 'a small piece cut off', also a contemptuous term for a small person, cf. Tarkington, *Magn. Ambersons* 158: "the impertinent little snippet that hasn't any respect for anything" ... "Snippet! How elegant! And 'little snippet'—when I'm over five-feet-eleven?"

*Fribble*, e. g. Lowndes, *Ivy* 163 this lovely young fribble of a woman—for such was her old-fashioned expression. Ibid. 264.

*Nipper*, slang, 'boy'.

*Whipster*. *Whippersnapper*. *Whipper-snip* Cl. Dane, *First the Blade* 20 of a small girl. Cf. Galsworthy, *Fors. Ch.* 147 "That *snip-petty whippet!*" said Swithin—perhaps the first use of the term.

*Pygmy* or *pigmy*, Fr. *pygmée*, through Lat. from Gr. *pugmáios*, from *pugme* the measure from elbow to knuckles'. In E often as adj. applied to other things than a man: a pigmy army.

*Piccaninny*, 'little child, esp. of natives', from the West Indies extended very widely; in the East, in Beach-la-Mar, the usual adjective for 'little'. From Sp. *pequeñino*.

*Kid*. Bennett, *Clayh.* 1.103 kid ... the chit's chittishness

OE. *ticcen*, Me. *ticchen* 'a kid, a young goat'.

*Chick*, *chicken*; as a term of endearment also *chuckabiddy*.

*Kitten*.

*Pig*, in speaking of a child often *piggy*, *piggy-uggy*.

*Tit* 'horse small of kind', cf. NED.—*Tom Tit*.

*Midge*, thought of as smaller than a gnat? *Midget* [midʒit] still smaller.

*Grig* 'small person (†), small hen, eel, etc.'

*Tick* 'parasitic insect', applied contemptuously to small persons, as in Wells *Joan and P.* 381: "he regarded her as nothing more than a 'leetle teeny female tick', and descanted on the minuteness of her soul and body."

*Nit*, OE. *hnitu* 'egg of louse', also contemptuously applied to a person (Shakespeare and other Elizabethans; still U. S., see Lewis, *Babb.* 277 I guess you think I'm an awfully silly little nit!) Russ. *gnida*, Lett. *gnída*, ON. *gnit*, G. *nisse* 'egg of louse'. The correspond-



ing Dan. *gnidder* (pl. of obs. *gnid*) has been confused with another word and is now also used of small, cramped writing.

*Shrimp*, this too in contempt of a puny person (Chaucer, Shakespeare, &c.).

*Minnow*, "often loosely applied to any small fish ... *fig.* as a type of smallness ... quasi-*adj.* very small" NED.

*Mite*, "in early use, applied vaguely to any minute insect or arachnid .. Now .. chiefly applied to the cheese-mite" NED.

*Bird*, ME. with [ɪ]-sound and with the meaning 'little (or young) bird', lost at about the same time both sound and meaning of little. *Dicky-bird* 'little bird'.

*Pixy*, little fairy, supposed to be an infant's soul; in a story by Quiller-Couch spelled *piskj*.

*Nix*, *nixie*, 'water-elf', also, I suppose, now generally imagined as a diminutive being; the word is taken from G. *nix*, *nixe*, and the OHG. *nichus*, from which it is derived, is identical with OE. *nicor* 'water-demon', which is represented as a dangerous being (*Beowulf* 422), thus hardly a small one. The notion of smallness thus may be secondary, suggested by the vowel.—I add that the Scandinavian *nisse*, *nis* 'brownie' is imagined as little; the name is generally supposed to be derived from *Niels* = *Nicolaus*, though the connexion with the saint is far from obvious, see H. F. Feilberg, *Nissens historie*, København 1919 p. 105.

G. *kind*. From G. *kindchen* the old E. cant word *kinchin*.

Norw. *kind* 'child', as a petname in lullabies (Aasen, cf. also Torp, *Nynorsk etymologisk ordbok*).

Dan. obs. *pilt* 'little boy'. In Bornholm *pilk*, which is also found in the Orkneys (Jacobsen, *Festskrift t. Feilberg*).

Dan. *spinevip* 'mannikin'.

Dan. *fims* 'slim little person'.

Norw. *pis*, *pise* 'weakling'.

G. *knurps* 'pigmy'; also *stimps*.

Lat. *filius*, -a, Sp. *hijo*, -a, Fr. *fil*, *fil*le, &c.

Sp. *nino*.

Sp. *chico*, *chiquillo*, Fr. *chube*, from Lat. *cicum*, Gr. *kikkos* 'core of an apple, small thing', Lat. *cica* 'trifle'. Sp. also *chiquitico*, -tillo, *chiquitico* -tito and other forms

Sp. *chibo* 'kid'.

It. *bimbo* 'little boy'.

Magy. *fi* 'son, boy, young animal' (etym. = Finnic *poika*).

Dan. *kid* 'kid'.

Dan. *killling* now means 'kitten' and has taken the place of the earlier regular form *kælling*, *kelling*, ON. *ketlingr*, either through confusion with *killling*, a diminutive of the just mentioned *kid* (P. K. Thorsen) or through the tendency to have [i] in names of young animals.

Dan. *gris*. ON. *griss* '(little) pig'.

*Tit*, *titlark*, *titmouse*, *pipit* 'small birds'.

## § 4. WORDS FOR SMALL THINGS

Here we meet with a miscellany of words which it is impossible to classify—many of them also impossible to elucidate etymologically. I give my collection for what it is worth.

*Bit*, orig. as much as is bitten off, but applied to anything small or any small amount. Similarly Dan. *bid*, cf. *bitte* above.—Expanded in Galsworthy, *Freelands* 125 the good gentleman was a *tiddy-bit* off (not in *Dicts*).

*Whit* (not a whit). The old etymology, from *weight*, is probably wrong. I suggest connexion with *white*, the shortening of the vowel being symbolical, both through preserving the [ɪ]-sound instead of the diphthong [ai], and through the shortness of the vowel itself, interrupted by the stop [t]. Meaning: a (small) white spot? Or cf. Dan. *hvid*, an old small silver coin (ikke en hvid, not a farthing), MLG. *witte*.

Norw. *pit*, *pita* 'little thin thing'.

*Piece*.

*Mite* (perhaps ultimately the same word as *mite* above, 'insect') small (Flemish) coin, MDu. *mīte*.

Sc. *nignay*, *nignye* 'trifle'.

*Tittle* 'a small stroke or dot in writing, a minute amount'. Note that in this sense we have the short [ɪ]-sound preserved, while in *title*, which has not the connotation of 'little', the vowel has been lengthened and diphthongized.

*Fribble* 'trifle', cf. above.

*Splinter*, *splint*, the latter also G. Dan. &c.

*Slice*, OFr. *esclice* from OHG. *slizzen*, cf. *slit* below.

*Squit*, Shaw *Mes.* 17 a little squit of a thing.

*Slip* 'twig', young being, a slip of a boy.

*Twig*.

*Sprig*.

Dan. *kvist* 'small twig'.

*Strip*, Dan. *stribe*, MHG. *strife*, Dan. *strimmel*, &c.

*Snip* 'small piece or slip cut off, small amount, diminutive person'; *snippet*, *snipping* 'small piece cut off'; in *snippets* and in *driblets*.

*Chip*, *chipping*.

*Pip* 'stone in stone-fruit', U. S. also *pit*; MLG. Du, etc., *pit* in the same sense.

Sc. *twitter* 'thin part of thread', also used of a delicate little girl.

*Trifle*: in ME. it had also a form with u or o, from OFr. *trufle*, but this original vowel only occurs with the signification 'false, idle tale, joke', while in the sense of 'little or insignificant matter' the vowel [i] only is found, either short, as indicated by the old spelling *triffle*, or long, which latter became [ai].

*Frippery* 'articles of small value', now chiefly 'finery in dress, etc.'

*Smithereens*, 'small bits, fragments', from Sc. now adopted into standard E., esp. in the phrase 'knock into smithereens'.

*Jetney*, local U. S. 'nickel, small coin'.

Lat. *titivillicium*, *titibilicum* 'very small thing', connected with *titulus*, cf. *tittle* above.

Lat. *quisquiliæ*, prob. a loan from Gr. *koskulmatia* 'refuse of leather', but then with symbolic change of vowel.

Lat. *mica*, Fr. *mue* in negative combination; Rum. *mică* 'moment'.

Portug. *pico*: *duas libras e pico* 'a little over two pounds', *tres horas e pico*, etc.

Sp. *triza* 'small matter'.

Lat. *filum* 'thread', F. *fil*, etc. (Cf. also *nihil*). If Lat. *funis* 'rope' is from the same root, the two vowels are indicative of the difference between thick and thin.

Fr. *nippes*, pl., 'gimcracks', hence G. *nippes* n., Dan. *nips*. Cf. E. *nip* 'small quantity of spirits', Dan. vb. *nippe* 'eat or drink in small quantities', 'sip'; Dan. *nippedrik* 'the habit of nip-nip-nipping'.

Ofr. *brique* 'fragment, bit', still in Swiss Romance 'piece, bit, débris'.

Prick, Dan. *prik* (also = 'dot').

Du. *stip* 'point, dot'.

G. *spitze*, Dan. *spids* 'point' (adj. 'pointed').

Sp., It. *picco* 'point', Fr. *pic*, E. *pike*, *peak* (see NED for the various etymological and historical difficulties).

*Tip*, cf. NED: "no etym. connexion with *top*; but the proximity of form and relative quality of sound in the two words have caused *tip* to be felt as denoting a thinner or more delicate top; cf. *drip*, *drop*, *chip*, *chop*, also *tip-top*".—To these might be added *lip*, *lop*, *sip*, *sop*, *sup*, *flip*, *flop*, *slip*, *slop*, *strip*, *strop*. cf. also *slit*, *slot*; *stick*, *stock*. Corresponding words in other languages.

*Nib*, variant of *neb* to indicate smallness; nib of a pen.

*Pin*. Dan. *pind* 'small stick'.

Dan. *fip*, formerly 'point', now chiefly in *fipskæg* 'chin-tuft'.

*Pinnace* 'small vessel'.

*Pinnacle* 'slender turret'.

*Slit* 'small aperture' (smaller than slot!) G. *schliss*; in the same sense:

*Chink* 'slit, fissure', of mysterious origin, earlier *chine*.

G. *rinne*, Dan. *rille* 'small groove'.

*Tingle*, MGH. *zingel* 'smallest kind of nail'.

G., Dan. *stift* 'small tack'.

Sc. *peak*, *peek* 'a small point of flame'.

Du. *pink* 'little finger'.

Dan. (Norw., LG.) *kim* (G. *keim*) 'germ, first small beginning'.<sup>1</sup>

*Drizzle* 'rain with fine drops'.

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<sup>1</sup> Note also the G. phrase "Das ist keinen *pfifferling* wert" (also *pfiff*), and finally the odd word *minibus* for 'a light covered vehicle', in use from 1849 to 1864, formed from *minus* and *bus*, *omnibus* being felt to be a big vehicle on account of the sound.

## § 5. DIMINUTIVE SUFFIXES

In diminutive suffixes, from which cannot be separated suffixes in pet-names (hypocoristic suffixes, as the term is in the learned lingo) we find *i*-sounds in very many languages.

E. -y, -ie as in *Willy*, *Dick*y, *Doll*y, *baby*, *laddie*, *auntie* &c. Spelt -ee in such trade-names as *coatee*, *bootee*.

G. (Switzerland) *Ruodi* = Rudolf, *Werni* = Werner, *Uli* = Ulrich, many similar forms of pet-names from older periods are given by F. Stark, *Die Kosennamen der Germanen*, Wien 1868 p. 52 ff. In OHG. there are many diminutives of common nouns in -i by the side of -in: *fugili* 'little bird', *chezzi*, 'kesselchen', Kluge, *Nomin. Stammbildungsl.* § 58.

Du. -ie, -je as in *kopje* 'little head, hill', *briefje* 'note'. In colloquial Dutch, and especially in the South African Taal this is pronounced as -i: *koppi*, *kassi*, &c. On the very extensive use of this suffix see H. Meyer, *Die Sprache der Buren*, 1901 p. 48 f.

Gr. -io- as in *pandion* from *pais* 'boy', *ornithion* 'little bird', *butairidion* 'little friend'.

Magyar -i: *Páli* = Pál, *Antali* = Antal, *Feri* = Ferencz, *pajti* 'little comrade', *bani* 'little lamb', &c. Simonyi, *Die ungar. Spr.* 77 and 315, believes that this ending was borrowed from German, but on p. 316 he mentions a Finno-Ugrian diminutive suffix -j- and a compound (native) suffix -li. There is also in Magyar a curious way of making words diminutive by changing their vowel to *i*: *madárka* 'bird', *madírka* 'little birdie', thus also in verbs, Simonyi p. 45.

Goth. -īn, spelt -ein, in *gautēin* 'little goat', *gumēin* 'little man', etc., OHG. *geizzin*. In E. *maiden* the *i*-sound has now disappeared.

Gr. -in-: *korakinos* 'young raven' (*korax*).

Ital. -ino, -ina: *bambino*, *giovino*, *piccolino*, *donnina*, Sp. rarer: *ansarino*, Port. *filhinho*. Note especially the extension with two *i*-sounds: It. *dominicina*, *barbicina* &c.

Of the many Irish diminutive terminations "only one—in or een—has found its way into Irish-English .. *een* is used everywhere: it is even constantly tacked on to Christian names (especially of boys and girls) *Mickēen* (little Mick), *Norēen*, *Billeēen* ... *birdēen*, *Robineēen*-Redbreast, *bonnieēen*, &c." (Joyce, *English as we speak it in Ireland*, 90). E. *queneen* 'small landowner'.

OHG. *-lin*: *sūnlin* 'little son', *schiflin*; in the modern *-lein* (*scherflein* &c.) and in the Swabian *-le* the effect of the *i* is obliterated, but in Swiss *-li* (*büebli*, *füessli* &c.) it is still a living force.

E. *-kin*: *lambkin*, *princekin*, corresponding to MDu. *-kijn* (*kindekijn*), MHG. *-kin* (*kindekin*); in modern G. *-chen* there is of course no longer any *i*-effect.

OE. *-incel*: *busincel* 'little house', *tunincel* 'small farm'.

E. *-ling*: *gosling*, *lordling*, *stripling*, &c.

Sp. *-ico*: *animalico*, *asnico*, *perrico*. Diez and Meyer-Lübke call attention to the fact that no such suffix with diminutive force exists in Latin, but they do not explain its origin and function. With expansion: *hombrecico*, *mujercica*. Cf. R. Lenz, *La Oracion y sus Partes*, Sec. ed. Madrid 1925, p. 200 "Un versito popular chileno ...

Tienes una boquirria  
tan chiquitirria,  
que me la comerirria  
con tomatirria.

Todo esto es evidentemente mímica fonética ... Los suffijos con *i* designan lo chico y bonito; con *a*, lo grande, robusto ...".

Portug. *-zinho*, *-zinha*, e.g. *liçãozinha* 'short lesson', *mãezinha* 'little mother', *avôzinho*, *-a* 'little grandfather, -mother', *mulherzinha* 'little woman', *mulherinha* 'scheming, intriguing woman'. J. Dunn, *Grammar of the Port. Language*, Washington 1928, p. 181.

Romanic *-itto*, *-itta* "of unknown (? non-Latin) origin" NED. But why think of foreign origin? Even if the suffix is not found in classical Latin, names like *Julitta*, *Livitta* are found in Latin inscriptions from the times of the emperors and "ont été suivis de l'innombrable descendance des *Juliette*, *Henriette*, *Antoinette*, etc.", Bréal, *Mém. Soc. Linguist.* 7. 192. In Span. we have, for instance, *arbolito*, *agujita*, and with expansion *arbolcito*, *mujercita*. In It. *-etto*, *-etta* and in Fr. *-et*, *-ette* the suffix has lost the phonetic *i*-symbolism, but in E., where the suffix has been adopted, it is again pronounced with an [i] sound, though, it is true, with the wide and somewhat lowered variety; *islet* [ailit]. The suffix as such is little used in English formations, but has given rise to the expanded suffix:

E. *-let* [-lit], whose *l* is due to such examples of the *-et*-suffix

as *islet*, *eaglet*, *circlet*, but whose popularity is certainly to a great extent due to the accidental similarity with *little*: *cloudlet*, *leaflet*, *budlet*, etc.

Rumanian *-ița*: *gurița* little mouth, *corfița*, &c., Meyer-Lübke § 416.

It. *-iglio*, *-icchio* from Lat. *-iculo*: *borsiglio*, *dottoricchio*.

Sp. *-illo*, *-illa* from Lat. *-ello*: *animalillo*, *asnillo*, *abejilla* and with expansion *hombrecillo*, *mujercilla*.<sup>1</sup>

In the face of all these instances there can be no denying the fact that the speech instinct in many languages is in favour of using diminutive suffixes containing the sound of [i] and of attributing a diminutive meaning to such suffixes, even if they may not at first have connoted the idea of 'little'. Lat. *-inus* at first means what belongs to or has some relation with; Diez (*Gramm.* 4th ed. 2.339) explains the rise of the diminutive signification from the notion of descentance: "*sororinus* ist sprössling der *soror*, *libertinus* des *libertus*, *amitina* der *amita*; das jüngere aber lässt sich leicht als das kleinere auffassen". Meyer Lübke II § 452 says: "Mais alors le sens de 'ressemblance' exprimé par l'adjectif s'est développé dans une direction toute différente; un object analogue à un autre fut considéré comme inférieur à lui, comme plus petit, et voilà comment *-inu*, dans l'italien et le portugais notamment, est devenu un suffixe diminutif très employé". This does not sound very cogent, and the reason for the new function of the suffix is to my mind rather to be sought in vowel symbolism.

With regard to E. *-y*<sup>2</sup> there is a very learned and painstaking disquisition by K. F. Sundén, *On the origin of the hypocoristic suffix -y (-ie, -ey) in English*, in *Festskrift tillägnad K. F. Johansson*, Göteborg 1910, 131 ff., in which the writer examines everything about the use and chronology of the suffix. It is not easy to condense his forty pages into a few clear lines, and I am not quite sure that I have always understood his reasoning. He repudiates the view of Fick und Stark, that our suffix is etymologically the same as the

<sup>1</sup> As a kind of diminutives we may consider patronymics, e. g. Gr. *Atre-ídēs* (cf. in modern scientific use *arab/nid*), *Sen-ile*.

<sup>2</sup> The explanation now given by W. Franz (*Shakespeare's Blankvers*, Tübingen 1932), from ME. *sone nin(e)*, is too fanciful to be probable.

Greek *-ios* and Swiss-German *-i*, as in that case it must in ME., nay already in OE., have passed into the weak ending *-e* and have ceased to be sounded later (1); besides we are unable to trace the NE. hypocoristic ending further back than the 15th c. (2).

Then there were a certain number of personal names having the ending *-i* as an integral part of the name; this was analogically transferred to other names, especially to short ones. The ending as such had at first no hypocoristic function, but the short forms to which it was added (and which had originally had a hypocoristic *-e*) were in themselves pet-names, and this notion was afterwards associated with the ending, which might then with this new value be added to other words (3).—This theory seems to be rather artificial. (1) Why may not the ME. pet-ending *-e* have passed into *-i* in the same way as ME. *pitte* became *pitte*? The vowel would be especially liable to resist mutescence if felt to be possessed of signification. (2) The non-existence of the ending in earlier texts does not prove much, because written *-e* may mean our ending; besides, pet-names and pet-formations may have existed long in the spoken language without being thought worthy of being committed to writing in an age that was not as apt as our own to record familiar speech. (3) One does not see any inducement to add an *unmeaning* ending from some Christian names to others: it is quite different if the ending is felt to possess an endearing element. It may be difficult historically to connect the diminutive ending *-y* with the Gr. and Swiss ending as "etymologically identical", but if it has risen independently in recent times in England (which I think far from probable, though not impossible), at any rate its use is due to the same feeling of the symbolical value of the vowel [i]. The three phonetically and semantically identical suffixes are, if not in the strictest sense genealogically akin, yet without any contradiction intrinsically related to one another (what Schuchardt calls 'elementar-verwandschaft').

Note also that children will often of themselves add an *-i* at the end of words; this is stated of some German children by Ament, *Die Entwicklung von Sprechen u. Denken beim Kinde*, 1899, 69, of English children by Sully *Studies of Childhood*, 1895, 419, and of American children by Tracy, *Psychology of Childhood*, 1903, 132.



with examples like *bodschi* brot, *dinnie* dinner, *beddie* bread or bed, *ninnie* drink, &c. Traits like these will naturally be imitated by nurses and fond mothers, and as this linguistic trick is thus associated with children and nurseries, it will naturally acquire a hypocoristic or diminutive force.

As a diminutive suffix may also be considered *-ish* as added to adjectives, e.g. *brownish*, *oldish*, *thinnish*.

I would call attention to a further point of importance.

These suffixes containing the sound [i] may also serve to indicate *female sex*. In many languages we find, not unnaturally, that the notions of smallness or weakness and of femininity go together, thus very often in the gender distinctions of African languages (see Meinhof, *Die Sprachen der Hamiten* 23, Fr. Müller III. 2. 237 and elsewhere): names of men and big things form one class, those of women and small things another. It is no wonder, therefore, that many of the suffixes used to form feminines resemble diminutive suffixes in containing the sound [i]. Examples:

*-i* in Skr. *vrk-i* 'she wolf' (an effect of *i* lingers still in ON. *ylgr*); Skr. *napt-i*, Lat. *neptis* (OHG. *nift*, G. *nichte*) &c.

Romanic *-itta*, used very early, as we saw, in fem. names like *Julitta*.

Rumanian *-ita*: *baronita*, &c., which Meyer-Lübke § 368 thinks borrowed from Slav; § 416 he says that the identity of the Slav suffix with Lat. *-icia* is "une coincidence fortuite"—but in both we recognize the same psychological trait!

Romanic *-ina* is much more frequent than *-ino* and enters into numerous feminine personal names, which have been adopted into other languages (G., Dan. &c.). The suffix thus becomes a favourite means of forming female names: *Paulina*, *Pauline*, *Carolina*, *-ine*, *Josephina*, *-ine*, Dan. *Jensine* from *Jens* 'John', &c.

G. *-in* (orig. *-inja*): *königin*, &c., Dan. *-inde*: *præstinde* 'priestess', &c., in E. now only in *vixen*.

OHG. *-is* in *chebis*, OE. *ciefes* 'concubine'.

Gr. *-issa*: *basilissa* 'queen', whence Romanic *-issa*, Fr. *-esse*, E. *-ess*, again with [i]-sound.

Lat. *-trix* from masc. *-tor*: *victrix*, adopted into E. Cf. for corresponding Germanic formations Kluge, *Nom. Stammbild.* § 44.

ME. *-ild*: *fostrild* 'nurse' and some others, from the ending *bild* in many fem. names.

This enumeration does not claim to be complete, and for the history of each suffix the reader must be referred to grammars and dictionaries. But it will now be clear, that if by the side of the recent G. loan *nix* we have *nixie* as 'female water-elf', this is due just as much to sound-symbolism as to the G. form *nixe*.

## § 6. OTHER NOTIONS

There is a class of verbs that is closely connected with the notions exemplified in § 2, meaning either to make small or to become small: *mince* (*minutiare*), *shrink*, *shivel*, *shrim*, *dwindle*,<sup>1</sup> *peak* (which in the NED. is defined 'sink, shrink, slink, sneak': four verbs with i-sounds).

Next we have some expressions for a very short time and what can be done in a short time:

E. *jiffy*, *jiff*: Sc. *in a clinck*. written *in a klink*, Barrie, *Tom & Gr.* 143. Cf. also "wait half a tick" (Mackenzie, *Sin. S.* 1.438).

E. *fit* 'short attack of fever, etc.', also 'short time'.

Dan. *srip* 'a slight stroke, a hurry, a short trip'.

E. *trip*.

Further adjectives like *quick*, *glib*, *vivid*, *diligent*, *nippy*, Alabama (Payne) *lippity-click* (or *-clip*) adv. 'rapidly'—*fickle*, *giddy*, *busy*, *nimble*, *swift*—*fleet*, *speedy*.

Words for 'quick', etc., in other languages: Dan. *kvik*, *livlig*, Swed. *pigg*, Fr. *vite*, *vif*, *rapide*, It. *vispo*, *visto*; Jap. *kirikiri* 'quick'.

Then some verbs may be mentioned, which indicate a rapid motion (some of them also the sound produced by such a motion, thus more onomatopoeic in nature than the rest of the words dealt with in this paper). It is interesting to see the NED. define the verb *snick* as 'to cut, snip, clip, nick'—thus chiefly by means of words containing a short [i], cut off by a voiceless stop; cf. also to *slit*, *split*, *splinter*, *rip*, *chip*, *slip*, *whip*, *whittle*; further *jig*, *fillip*, *flip*, *flit*, *flutter*, *flick*, *flicker*, *fisk*, *frisk*, *whisk*, *fidget*, *jink*, *mizzle* (slang,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. OE. *duwnan* 'dwindle' and the "rime-words" collected by F. A. Wood, I. F. 22. 142.

'decamp'), *nip up, tib, tibble* (school slang), cf. Cl. Dane, *First Bl* 67 when you've grown up the days go quicker.—Oh, yes—they simply *wbiz*. We have already (p. 293) seen the verb *nip*, cf. also *nibble*, Dan. *nippe* (til), G. *nippen* or *nipfen*. It would certainly be easy to find other similar verbs; possibly *to tip* = 'to give' (orig. touch lightly?) with the sb. *tip* 'small gratuity' belongs here.

Here also belong *blink, wink, twinkle* (with the phrase *in a twinkling*, Goldsm. 658, Dickens *Domb.* 385; also *in the twinkling of an eye*), *flicker, glint, glitter, glimmer*, expressive of short, intermittent lights, etc. Figuratively in Locke, *Com. of Am.* 156 I have a glimmer of what you mean.

For a rapid movement Danish has the two verbs *pile a(v)* and *kile a(i)*—now also *bile*, from *bil*, a shortened *automobil*; for a small movement *rippe sig*.

Some words for 'arrow' contain the vowel *i*: Scand. *pil*, MLG. *pil* (G. *pfeil*, Du. *pijl*) from Lat. *pilum*; Lat. *sagitta*; OPers *tigra* (whence the name of *tiger*).

Rapid movement (not simply 'go') is at the bottom of Lat. *ire*; Gr. *ῥπτῶ* 'throw, sling', *ῥμφα* 'fast, vividly'.—The Dutch everyday word for 'bicycle' is *fiet*s (short *i*).

With the idea of smallness is also connected that of the verbs *sting* 'inflict a small wound with pointed dart, etc.', *nip* and *pinch* 'nip between thumb and finger'; in the figurative use this is connected with other *i*-words: *stingy, niggardly*; cf., e.g. Jenkins, *Bindle* 208 an' me *inchen* an' *pinchin* 'to keep you in food. Further in the same sense *stint, skim, scrimp* (e.g. Dreiser, *Free* 130).

Further we may mention the synonyms *tiff, miff, whiff*, and (rarer) *quiff* (Masefield, *Capt Marg.* 309) 'slight quarrel or fit of ill-humour'; cf. *biff* 'a blow'. And finally *niggle* 'do anything in a trifling, fiddling way' with *niggling* and *niggly* (e.g. Locke, *Com. of Amos* 156). *Niggle* is also used of small cramped handwriting.

*Quip* is defined 'little, witty remark, clever hit, quibble', note here the many short *i*'s. The word is supposed to be from *quippy* = Lat. *quippe* (probably as used in University disputations).

We shall now pass to some reflexions of a more general character.

## § 7. SEMANTIC AND PHONETIC CHANGES

The feeling that the sound [i] is particularly fit to express smallness may have influenced the semantic and phonetic development of some words.

E. *pittance* means originally a pious donation (from \**pietantia*) without regard to the greatness of the donation; thus in Chaucer A 224 a good pittaunce. But now it is always understood as a small portion or scanty allowance.

*Miniature* at first meant an image painted with minium (vermilion), but now in English as well as in other languages it means simply a very small picture, or anything done on a small scale, as in De Quincey: "I took a very miniature suite of rooms", and Jenkinson: "This stream contains many lovely miniature cascades" (NED).

*Trivial* now is more rarely used in the old sense of 'commonplace, such as may be met with everywhere' (Lat. *trivium*), than for what is slight or of small account.

Dan. *hib* (or *hip*) with short [i], from G. *bieb*, now means a slight skit or innuendo; cp. E. *quip* above.

OFr *pite* means 'farthing, mite, thing of small worth', but it is supposed to be derived from a word which does not connote the idea of smallness, viz. *picta*, *Pictava*, the name of Poitiers.

The Anglo-Indian *chit* is from Hind. *chit̥hi* 'letter', but as used by English people it means a short note.

Dutch *pikkedillen* is from Sp. *peccadillo* 'slight offence', but it has come to mean 'trifles' without any implication of misdemeanour.

When one wants to express something very small, one sometimes uses words belonging to other spheres, provided they contain the sound *i*; thus Galsw., *Fam. Man* 100 I don't care a *kick* what anybody thinks (cf. don't care a *fig* or a *pin*) and G. *idee*: Kellermann Neunte nov. 337 Nun bewegte sich der stein eine idee.

The influence on sound development is first seen in the very word *little*. OE. *lytel* shows with its *y*, that the vowel must originally have been *u*, and this is found in OSax. *lutil*, OHG. *luzzil*; cf. Serb. *lud* 'little' and OIr. *lútu* 'little finger' (Falk and Torp); but then the vowel in Goth. *leitils* (i. e. *litils*) and ON. *litinn* is so difficult

to account for on ordinary principles that the NED. in despair thinks that the two words are "radically unconnected". I think we have here an effect of sound symbolism. The transition in E. from *y* to *i* of course is regular, being found in innumerable words in which sound symbolism cannot have played any role, but in modern English we have a further slight modification of the sound which tends to make the word more expressive. I refer to the form represented in spelling as "leetle". In Gill's *Logonomia* (1621, Jiriczek's reprint 48), where he mentions the "particle" *tjni* (*j* is his sign for the diphthong in *sign*) he writes "a litl tjni man" with *i* (his sign for the vowel in *seen*), though elsewhere he writes *litl* with short *i*. NED. under *leetle* calls it "a jocular imitation of a hesitating (?) or deliberately emphatic pronunciation of little". Payne mentions from Alabama *leetle* "with special and prolonged emphasis on the *i* sound to indicate a very small amount". I suspect that what takes place is just as often a narrowing or thinning of the vowel sound as a real lengthening, just as in Dan. *bitte* with narrow or thin [i], see above. To the quotations in NED. I add the following: Dickens *Mutual Fr.* 861 "a leetle spoilt", Wells *Tono-B.* 1. 92 "some leetle thing", id. *War and Fut.* 186 "the little aeroplane . . . such a leetle thing up there in the night".—It is noteworthy that in the word for the opposite notion, where we should according to the usual sound laws expect the vowel [i] (OE *micel*, Sc. *mickle*, Goth. *mikils*) we have instead *u*: *much*, but this development is not without parallels, see *Mod. E. Gr.* I. 3. 42. In Dan. dial. *mög(el)* for the same word the abnormal vowel is generally ascribed to the influence of the labial *m*; in both forms the movement away from *i* may have been furthered by sound-symbolic feeling.

The vowel in E. *weak* is difficult, we should expect *woke* if from OE. *wāc*, or *wak* if from Scand. *veik*. I. c. 3. 234: can the [i·] have been caused by the tendency to express weakness in sound?

If *brisk* is from Fr. *brusque*, it belongs here; cf. *frisk*, *whisk*.

The vowel of *great* is exceptional in the opposite direction: we should expect [i·], which was also frequent in the 18th century, but which was possibly felt to be incongruous with the meaning of the adjective (cf. *Mod. E. Gr.* I 11. 75).

Sp. *pequeñino* has become E. *picanniny*, see above.

In my lists above there will be found several examples of symbolic vowels that have been modified in course of time in accordance with the usual sound tendencies of the language in question, exactly as some echoisms have by and by lost their onomatopoeic character. Thus long *i* has been diphthongized in *mite* and other words. This is also the case when *tiny* has now become [taini], but alongside of that form we have also [ti-ni] with retention of the symbolic vowel, a pronunciation which is used more often by children and ladies than by grown up men. Cf. Wells, *Twelve St.* 106 'their "teeny weeny" little house', London *Valley M.* 184 'the teeniest accident'. Bennett, *Lord R.* 304 (nurse:) "It's time for you to have your teeny-weeny dose of brandy". To the nurse he was a little child ... "Teeny-weeny!" Odious!" Both forms are connected in Brock, *Ded. of Col. Gore* 192 I'm just a teeny-tiny bit snappish this evening. See also above, s. v. *tick*.

Curiously enough we have in E. a series of words with short *i* before *p*, which have the connotation of 'little' and which cannot be accounted for etymologically, but which appear as side-forms of words with back-round vowels and without that connotation, see above, s. v. *tip*. The NED. says of *sip*: "possibly a modification of *sup* intended to express a slighter action", and of *sippet* (a small piece of toasted bread): "app. intended as a diminutive of *sop*. Cf. *supett* in Wyclif". There is a rare word *trip* (different from *trip* 'short excursion'), obsolete in the sense 'troop of men', but still in use of a small flock (of game); NED. says "Etymology obscure: perh. related to *troop*"—evidently a symbolic modification. Similarly *sipling* is a modification of *sapling*.

—*Linguistica*, 1933.



## VOICED AND VOICELESS FRICATIVES IN ENGLISH<sup>1</sup>

### I.

OE *f*, *þ*, *s*.

THE first question to occupy us here is this: what phonetic value are we to ascribe to the OE letters *f*, *þ* (*ð*) and *s*? Where these letters stand medially between vowels or in other voiced surroundings, there can be no doubt that the sounds were voiced, i.e. [v, ð, z], but if they stand initially or finally, the matter is not so obvious.

The question was dealt with at some length by Henry Sweet in the very first paper he published, "The History of the TH in English" (Transactions of the Philological Society, 1868—9, pp. 272—88), reprinted in "Collected Papers of Henry Sweet, arranged by H. C. Wyld", Oxford 1913, p. 169 ff. This paper was partly rewritten and enlarged in Appendix I of Sweet's edition of King Alfred's West-Saxon Version of Gregory's *Pastoral Care*, London 1871, but curiously enough, it was the first, not this revised version that was reprinted in the *Collected Papers*. Much in this paper, ingenious as it is, must now be considered antiquated, as later research has thrown light on much in the old sound shift which could not be known to Sweet; but on one point he is undoubtedly right: nothing can be gathered with regard to pronunciation from the use in OE manu-

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<sup>1</sup> This is the final chapter "Stemmeformhold i deklinationen" of my dissertation "Studier over engelske kasus. Med en indledning. Fremskridt i sproget", København 1891. This part of my old book has never before appeared in English (as the others did in "Progress in Language"); it is here partly rewritten, and many new details are added.



scripts of the two letters þ and ð: both are used indiscriminately, now for the voiced, now for the voiceless sound.

The view entertained for a long time by Sweet is expressed in his usual dogmatic way in various editions of his *Anglo-Saxon Reader*: “*f* had the sound of *v* ... Before hard consonants, of course, it had the sound of *f* ... *s* had the sound of *z* ... When combined with hard cons., = *s* ... *þ* and *ð* both = *dh* in *then*, except in such combinations as *sēcþ*, where *þ* = *th* in *think*.” In *History of English Sounds* 1888 § 515 ff. (cf. 728 ff., 909 ff.) the expressions are necessarily less dogmatic, but the main result is the same.

The same view was shared by Ellis, EEP 5.38 and 823. A survival of this view is found in H. C. Wyld's *Short History of English*, 3rd ed. 1927, p. 60 f., thus long after Sweet had abandoned it (see below), and only with regard to *s* and *f*, while it is said that *ð* (*þ*) was probably voiceless initially and finally.

Sweet's view was chiefly based on the following reasonings: Intervocalic *þ* was voiced, as *d* is often written for it; *s*, too, is voiced, as shown by such forms as *liesde* in contrast with *cyste* from *cyssan*. The voiced pronunciation of the three sounds when initial is made probable in the first place by the agreement with Dutch and German *d* in *ding*, Dutch *v* and *z* in *volk*, *zeven*; North German also has initial *z*, and OHG had initial *v*, which is still preserved in writing (*volk*), while it has been unvoiced. Secondly, and more decisively, the voiced sound of initial *s*, *f* is made probable by the evidence of the southern ME and ModE dialects, which have [z, v]. In these initial *v* and *z* must have been fully developed before the 11th century, as Norman words keep voiceless *s* and *f*.

Several things, however, speak against Sweet's view.

The agreement with Dutch and German, of course, shows very little with regard to OE pronunciation, as the voiced sounds can easily have been due to later parallel development. Sweet also tends to think that the Anglian and Jutish dialects of OE never had the voiced sounds initially.

In OE (West-Saxon) we have some cases of *t* for earlier *d*, which are most easily explained from the supposition that *s*, *þ*, *f* were voiceless: *gitsung*, *Altfriþ*, *Eatþryþ*. An assimilation is here extremely natural, while this cannot be said of Sweet's explanation

(HES § 524) according to which "in the combination voiced stop or buzz + buzz both elements are unvoiced ... This tendency is evidently the result of the attempt to strengthen the acoustic effect of the open consonant". Such an unvoicing would seem to go counter to all ordinary sound-development. The only one of Sweet's examples that seems at all pertinent is "*bledsian* in Vespasian Ps. (from \**blōdizōn*) becomes *bletsian* in WS"—but this also proves nothing until it is raised beyond all doubt that the suffix really had a voiced *z*, but it is much more likely that it had *s* (note Thurneysen's dissimilation theory of *s* after a stem ending in voiced and *z* after a stem ending in voiceless consonant, IF 8.208 ff.). Where one of these consonants comes before the voiced *w*, it is itself voiced in accordance with the usual rules of assimilation: OE *huswif* > *buzzy*. For our view speaks also the assimilation of *-deþ* in the 3rd person sg. *sendeþ* > *sent*; cf. also *nostril* from OE *nos-byrel*. The assimilations found in *Subfolk* > *Suffolk*, *Subseaxe* > *Sussex*, OE *ladþeow* > *latteow*, *godsibb* > *gossip*, are easily explained if we assume voiceless *f*, *þ*, *s*, but are hardly natural under the opposite supposition.

### *Ancrene Riwe.*

There is thus a high degree of probability for the voicelessness of *s þ f* in OE, even in those parts of England which in ME and ModE have the voiced sounds. But this view is definitely corroborated by a discovery I made in 1890 with regard to the spelling used in one of the most important early ME literary texts, the *Ancrene Riwe*. (In a parenthesis I may here repeat the remark I have made elsewhere, that the correct title of that book is *Ancrene*, and not *Ancren*, *Riwe*, as James Morton erroneously printed it: when I went through the text and found not a single gen. pl. in *-en*, but many in *-ene*, I suspected that the title itself ought to be *Ancrene Riwe*, and Miss A. Paues was kind enough to look up the manuscripts for me; she found the title *Ancren Riwe* nowhere, but *Ancrene Wisse* in MS Corpus Chr. Coll. Cambridge 402; the MS Nero A XIV in the Cottonian collection (Brit. Museum), from which Morton printed his text, has no heading or colophon, but the title on the binding is *Ancrene Riwe*, "but I cannot ascertain the date of this

binding or the authority which it followed. It might be either shortly before or shortly after Morton's ed<sup>n</sup>", writes G. C. Macaulay, who refers to the passage in Morton's ed., p. 4 "Nu aski ze hwat riwle ze ancren schullen holde" out of which he suspects Morton invented his title—but here, of course, *ancren* is the nom., not the gen.!)

My little discovery was that the scribe of AR, so far from using, as had always been supposed, *f* and *v* (*u*) indiscriminately for OE *f*, followed a strict system which allows us to draw conclusions as to his pronunciation.

He writes with great consistency initial *f* after a voiceless and *v* (*u*) after a voiced sound. Examples occur in nearly every line of the book: I write down *all* examples of initial *f*, *v* found on ten consecutive pages chosen at random, including participles beginning with *i-* = OE *ge-*, as well as second elements of compounds.

A. *v* after voiced final sound: 192 me ueire / blisse uorte uallen / ilke uondunges / to uroure / one ureond / ham uroure / Vor uein / for ureoleic / one ueder (OE *fæder*) / zuweðe uorheten / 194 þeonne ueined / to uonden / uttre uondunge (*passim*) / inre uondunge (*passim*) / sigge uorði / mislikunge uor / to uot / beon uor / muche uorði / ivelyð / twouold / biuoren / 196 alle uondunges / iðe vihte / þe ueond / owune vleshs / þe ueond / 198 slouhðe vox / þe vorme / oðer uorhowed / þe ueorðe / ne ualleð / þe vifte / þeo uedeð / haluwen uor / undernumen uorto / 200 oðer uorgiteð / þe ueorðe / þe uifte / 202 þe uorme / þe ueorðe / þe vifte / Seoruwe uor / oðer uor / bute uor / biuoren / alle; uor / to-uret / þe Vox / strençðe; Uals / oker; Uestschipe / to uoxe / iðe uoxe / þe uox / one urechliche (Morton wrongly *ur-*, corrected by Kölbing) uorswoluwen / 204 tisse urakele / þerto; uor / to Urechliche / iveruwed ('farrowed', allied to OE *fearb*, pig) / ham; uor / ham ueden / nemnen; vor / sibbe vleshliche / wil uorte / 206 stude uorto / swuche uorrideles / fulðe uenliche uallen / þe uorrideles / iued / der uor / ivelyð / 208 ivedeð / þeruore / scheau uorð / swuðe vlih / þer urommard / Vnstaðeluest / to ualleð / abiden uorte / 210 þe ueorðe / schulde uorwurden / þe uorðfarinde uondeð to uordonne / þe ueonde / to ualleð / an uour (Kölbing) / dome uorte.—Further, *v*, *u* is of frequent occurrence in words after a full stop, especially *uor* (p. 192 and 194 even 8 times); here probably belong also *uoluweð* 196 and

*rikeled* 198, although only after a comma, which, however, may have denoted a pause.

B. *f* after voiceless final sound; note the frequent sign 7 = *and*, which is written in full: *ant* on pp. 200, 206, 208, etc.<sup>1</sup>; in OE *mid*, too, the *d* must have developed into *t*, although the old *d* is retained in writing.

192 *þeos fondunges* (twice) / *beoð ful* / 7 for / 194 of *figelunge* / *worldes figelunge* / *þeos fondunges* / *Vlesches fondunge* / *gostlich fondunge* / *eð fele* / 196 *blisfule* / *þet flesch* / *auh fleoð* / *deores fleschs* / *Louerdes folc* / 198 *þauh ful* / *hweolp fet* (twice) / 200 of *feire* / *swuðest for* / *ich feðri* / 7 *fet* / 202 *his freond* / of *freond* / 204 *þet feorðe* / *þet fifte* / 7 *fulen* / *is ful* / *þet fulðe* / *tet fleschs* / 206 *mot forbuwen* / 7 *feir* / *mot fleon* / *mid fere* / *mid flesches* / *makeð feir* / 7 *fikeð* / *hit forto* / *þet feire* / 208 *beodeð forð* / *scheaweð forth* / *Godes folke* / 7 *false* / 7 *falsliche* / 210 *uorðfarinde* / *ontfule*.

C. Exceptions are very few indeed. They can easily be accounted for,

(1) through the tendency to avoid the combination *uu*; one may compare German orthography, where *v* is written in *vor*, *voll*, etc., but *f* in *für*, *fülle*. Thus we have 192 *ou ful* / 194 *hore fule* / 196 *þer fuhten* / 206 *muchele fulðe* / *þe fule* / *eche fur* / 208 *oðer fundles*—seven cases in all on 10 pages, to which may be added *fur*, p. 192 after a pause;—

(2) through transference from those otherwise frequent forms that are legitimate after another final sound: 194 *gretture fleschliche* / 196 *alle flesches* / 202 *enne floc* / 204 *nout uorto* / (206 *þet ich ne mei speken of vor scheome*, probably with a pause after *of*)—not more than four or five cases, a number that speaks very favourably for the accuracy of the scribe.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rarely *and*, 200. Note *ant te* for *and þe*.

<sup>2</sup> *Flesh* is probably the word in which the rule is most often broken, though regular forms are also very frequent: thus we have in twelve consecutive lines, p. 406 *stincinde ulesshes* / *Hwat fleschs* / *Cristes fleschs* / *heo uleschliche* / *owene ulesshs* / *mon ulesshliche*. But the scribe certainly had a tendency to write *f* before another consonant, even where he evidently pronounced *v*, thus medially in *deofien*, *deofles* alongside of *deouel* (242, 244, etc.; rarely *deofel* 266, *deofuel* 280); *beðdes* 362, *on his beðde* 258 alongside of *beued*, *eðe* (62), generally *euer(e)*; *þet tu beuedest* / *þet tu beðdest* 38; *bilefde* alongside of *bileue*; *le(a)ðt*, *swefne*, *stefne*, *eðne*, *reafen*, *reafnes* 84 and a few more.

The correctness of my rule is shown especially by the numerous instances in which the same word was written in two different ways according to the final sound of the preceding word: *þeos fondunges : ilke uondunges ; scheawed forð : scheau uorð ; þe ueorðe, vifte : þet feorðe, þet fifte*: on p. 220 we have *Mine uoan* and immediately after that *his foan*, etc.

French words do not vary in the same way as native ones; cf. thus 208 *he fol* / *ib. oðer folliche* / 222 *hire fame* / *ib. makien feste* 232 *owune feblesce*; and on the other hand 216 *mest uileinie. Fals*, which is found in English as early as ab. 1000 (from Latin or French?) is treated as a native word: 68 *heom ualse* / 130 *þe ualse ... beoð false* / 128 *best falsest*.

The variation thus observed in initial consonants is to be compared with the well-known rule of Notker in Old High German: *Ter brâoder : ûnde des prâoder / tes kôldes : ûnde demo gôlde / ih fâbe : tu vâbest*, etc. Further in Italian dialects, e.g. Sardinia: *sas cosas : una gosa / sos poveros : su boveru / sos fizos : su vizu* (Schuchardt, Romania 3.1 ff., Nyrop, Adj. kønsbøjn. 1886, 24).

Traces of the same variation as in AR are found in other southern ME texts, but they seem nowhere carried through with the same consistency. In *On god ureison of ure lefdi* (Morris, Old Engl. Hom. I—also from MS Nero A XIV) we find, e.g., *cristes fîf wunden / miht forðelden / þet funde* over against the more usual *v-*: *me uorbere / al uorloren / me uor / fulle uorziuenesse*, etc. In the MS of Poema Morale discovered by Miss Paues (Anglia NF. 18.217 ff.) the variation between *f* and *v* (*u*) is observed nearly as consistently as in AR. In Juliana there is a good deal of vacillation (e.g. *hare fan* 32 = *hare uan* 33, *betefeste* 36 = *betueeste* 37, *forð* 56 = *uorð* 57; *reue : refschiþe* 9, etc.). In St. Katherine (ed. Einenkel, EETS 1884) initial *v* instead of the usual *f* seems used only twice (lines 1486 and 2134), but in both places after a vowel. Some other southern texts offer a few isolated instances of the same alternation.

The alternation between *f* and *v* in AR (and, partly, in other texts) gives us valuable information with regard to both initial and final sounds. As to the former it shows us that the voicing found in southern dialects had not yet been completely carried through ab. 1200 A.D.—still less can it have been in the Old English or Pre-

English period. Though (or, we might say, because) the old scribe's spelling is not capable of giving us any information on the sounds [s, z, þ, ð], we are certainly justified in assuming a similar alternation between voiceless and voiced sounds in the beginning of a word as that between *f* and *v*.

In reply to a letter about this, Sweet wrote to me (12.1.1891): "Your observation about initial *f*, *v* in the Ancren Riwe is a very interesting one, which as far as I know is quite new. But I do not think it proves initial *f* & c generally. I have shown in HES that *dz*, *vz* & c became regularly *ts*, *fs* & c (as in *bletsian*). Hence *pēoz vōndunges* would regularly change to *peos f-*. But I have not expressed myself positively on the general question in the HES, altho I favour the initial *v-* & c hypothesis for West-Saxon. As I have shown, there is a conflict of evidence for all the dialects." This shows some uncertainty on the part of Sweet: I replied by referring to what is said above on the phonetic improbability of the assumed change, and by saying that the theory at any rate could not account for final *f* before a vowel in AR, e.g. 126 *forgif us*. I was therefore glad to see Sweet in his *New English Grammar* (1892) completely accepting my view (see his generous mention of the younger man's work, p. xiii, and § 731, 861 ff.).

With regard to the sound at the end of a word, the peculiarity observed in the spelling of AR shows conclusively for all the three consonants here dealt with that the voiced pronunciation was unknown to the scribe, for *f* is consistently written after a word ending in *f*, *ð* or *s*. Additional examples to those already adduced are the following,—I choose here exclusively such words as in ModE end in voiced sounds:

216 uendes fode / 220 of fondunge (also 236) / 220 his foan / 222 peos foure / of freolac / 228 is from / 232 his fondunge / 238 is for / 250 of feor / 254 Samsunes foxes / 256 Godes flesch / 262 pe ueondes ferde / 264 te deofles ferde / 274 is fotes / 278 his feren / 380 his feder, etc.

Orm in his spelling had no means of distinguishing voiced and voiceless fricatives, but I am probably right in ascribing the voiceless sound to his spellings (in final position) *iss*, *biss*, *wass*, also when the words are unstressed, further *bokess*, *wiþþ*, etc.

*Ayenbite.*

While the scribe of AR had no means of indicating voice distinctions for *p* and *s*<sup>1</sup> as he had for *f*, *v*, we find, a century later, Dan Michel using not only *f*, *v* (*u*) as in AR, though without any sandhi rule, but also *s*, *z* for the corresponding distinction in blade sounds. Now, this is really very strange: how did Dan Michel hit upon this orthographic device? It was never before used in England, and in French at that time *z* was generally used for [ts],<sup>2</sup> while the sound we now phonetically write [z], was written *s*, just as [s]. However this may be, Michel writes *z* initially in most of the words that had OE *s* and that have [z] in modern South Thames dialects. He has, however, *sl-*, *sm-*, *sn-*: and after the prefix *y-*, OE *ge-*, he generally writes *s*, thus *ysecl*, *yse* over against *zayp*, *zi*, etc. In French words he has *s-*: *seruy*, *sauf*, etc., though *zaynt* is found alongside of *sayn(t)*. The author is no consistent phonetician, for in the interior of words he constantly uses the letter *s* for what evidently was pronounced [z], e.g. *chyese* OE *ceosan*, *housend* (also *houzen*), *rise*, *bisye*: similarly in French words, e.g. *spouse*, *mesure*, *cause*, *desni*: in *desert*, *tresor*, *must* *s* alternates with *z*.

The author says (p. 262) "þet þis boc is y-write mid engliss of kent"—but now Kent does not belong to those parts of southern England that have voiced fricatives initially, however those two facts may be reconciled. Ellis gives, 5.38 a list of spellings in *Ayenbite*, compared with modern dialects; on these latter see, besides Ellis, Joseph Wright's *English Dialect Grammar*, F. T. Elworthy's various works on West Somerset, and E. Kruisinga, *A Grammar of the Dialect of West Somerset*.

*Ayenbite* has final *f*, not *v*, and accordingly we may confidently assume that he pronounced final [s, p]; note the parallelism in the verbs, inf. *delue*, *keue*, *steue*, *chyue*, *rise*, *lyse*, *sethen*, but prt. *dalf*, *carf*, *staf*, *cheas*, *ros*, *lyeas*, *leas*, *seath*.

While with regard to *f*, *v* we have extensive evidence in the

<sup>1</sup> He writes *s* in French words like the following, where the sound was evidently [z] *noie*, *ereie*, *daynon*, *recluse*.

<sup>2</sup> In English, too, *s* was used for [ts], in AR, e.g. in *sidu*, *crente assau*, ('assaults'), *kuoz* pl. of *kuot* 'court'. A remnant of OFr *z* = [ts] is Fr *aviez*, in English treated as a pl. *avete*, whence a new sg. *avet*. In *fuz* (e.g. *Fitzroy*, *Fitzwilliam*) we have the sound [ts] from OFr *fuz*, nom., now *fuz*, [ts] being regular after palatalized *l*.

spelling, and with regard to *s*, *z* we have the evidence in Dan Michel's book, nothing can be seen in the same way in regard to ME *þ*, *ð*. In some early texts we might feel tempted to think that the old letter *þ* denoted the voiced and the new digraph *th* the voiceless sound,<sup>1</sup> but on closer inspection it is seen that *þ* is written for convenience only in the more familiar words, chiefly pronouns and pronominal adverbs, and *th* in less familiar words without any phonetic distinction at all.

#### *Fourteenth Century.*

In Chaucer rhymes seem to show conclusively that final *s* was voiceless in many words which have now [z], see, e.g. HF 141 *was : bras* | 158 and 267 *allas : was* | 1289 *glas : was* | 1291 *ywis : is* | 1341 *this : is* | 269 and 2079 *amis : is* | B 4521 *toos pl. : cloos* adj. Consequently such rhymes as, e.g., B 3420 *wynes : pyne is* may be used as evidence for the voiceless pronunciation of *-s* in the plural ending.

About the same period we have some curious spellings in the famous (Lancastrian?) Pearl-poems. Sweet HES § 728 interprets *sydez*, *gemmez*, *he lovez*, *he sez* as indicating the modern sound of [z]; thus also Jordan, Me. gramm., p. 185; but this is certainly wrong. The letter *z*, or rather *3*, denotes voiceless [s]: it is found in many cases where ModE has [s], e.g. *þrye3* (thrice), *elle3* (else), *meþele3*, *boþemle3* (-less); the ending *-ness* is written now *-ne3*, now *-nesse*; for *was* we find *wasse*, *wace* (rhyming with *space*, *grace*, *face*), but also *wat3*, and the same curious combination is found in *dot3* (= does), *got3*, (= goes). With *þou* we find forms like *says*, *sayt3*, *blame3*, *drawe3*, *dot3*, *wat3*, *wolde3*. In all these cases *-s*, *-3*, *-t3* can mean nothing but [s].<sup>2</sup>

The voiceless pronunciation of final *-s* is also evidenced by the addition of *-t*, in some particles: *against* < ME *againes*, *amidst*,

<sup>1</sup> Thus Hackauf in his ed. of *Assumptio Mariae*, p. XXXII (inversely Heuser in *Est.* 33 257). In R. Jordan's *Me. gramm.*, p. 181, Hackauf, Heuser, and myself are quoted as if we said all of us the same thing, though we have three different views!

<sup>2</sup> In London Engl. (ed. Chambers & Daunt, 1931) isolated instances: *we willet3* (59 = 58 *we willetþ*), *bat3* (= *hath*), *reoun asket3*. Another scribe (ib. 200) has a predilection for *3*: *dyner3* *ware3* *to the fraternite of grocer3* | 201 *uandeyne3* . *weyte3*.



*alongst, amongst*. In *whilst* the *t* may be the particle *þe*, whose [p] as usual was made into the stopped consonant after *s*, but in the other words there is no other explanation than a simple phonetic excrescence after *s* in the same way as in vulgar *nyst, clost, wunst, twyst, acrost* for *nice, close, once, twice, across* and others; in Standard speech we have also *earnest* (ME *ernes, erres, erles*) 'money paid as instalment'. The addition of *-t* is comparable with G. *papst, obst, jetzt* and others, Danish *taxi*. Swed. *eljest, medelst, hvarest*, etc. But what interests us here is that it presupposes voiceless [s] in the E. forms. I therefore think that the archaic *erst* 'formerly' is not to be apprehended as a superlative, but simply as the comparative *ere* + the adverbial *s* + this *t*. While AR has *erest* only as a real superlative (= OE *ærest*), Chaucer has two homophones *erst*, one a superlative (*at erst*), and the other without that signification, e.g. B 4471 Though he never erst had seyn it with his ye; E 144, 336, etc., also followed by *er*: C 662 Longe erst er pryme rong of any belle, and by *than*: A 1566 That shapen was my deeth erst than my sherte. A superlative followed by *than* would certainly be very unusual!

### *Medial Sounds.*

With regard to the pronunciation of OE *f, þ, s* when they occurred medially between vowels, Sweet is undoubtedly right when he thinks that they were voiced, = [v, ð, z]. For *þ* in this position we often in the earliest monuments find the spelling *d*, which denoted [ð] as in the then pronunciation of Latin (Sweet HES § 515, 516); *s* allows *d* in forms like *lusde*, different from *-te* in *cysste* from *cyssan* with [s]. For *f* see Sievers PBB 11.542 and Anglia 13.15: there were two original sounds which in the Epinal glossary were kept apart, one corresponding to Gothic and OHG *f*, written *f*, and one corresponding to Goth. and OHG *b*, written *b*; but at an early period they were confused. This explains the spelling with *f*, while it would not have been convenient to write *b*, which so often denoted the stop: the difference between voiced and unvoiced was not felt to be as important as that between the fricative and the stop, especially as the same word in different flexional forms had now the voiced, now the voiceless sound. But towards the end of the OE

period it became increasingly common to write *u* (= *v*) medially, e.g. Beowulf 1799 *bliuade*, Ælfric 1.4 *aleuað*; Chron. MS F often; after 1000 French influence rapidly made *u* universal in this position, so that *f* was reserved for the beginning and end of words.

### *Final th.*

The tendency to unvoice final consonants—in anticipation of the voiceless pause—which is found more or less strongly in all languages, is in English particularly strong with [ð] which often becomes [p]. Ekwall, *Zur geschichte der stimmhaften interdentalen spirans* (Lund 1906) tries to make out that final [ð] became [p] after a consonant or after a short vowel, but remained voiced after a long vowel, and this rule covers many of the facts, though not all. A good deal of uncertainty remains, and the pronouncements of the old phoneticians are often contradictory. I shall mention some of the cases in which we have now [p] as against earlier [ð]. After a consonant *earth*, *birth* (*r* was formerly a consonant); *month*; *health* and similar words: *strength* (an old form was *strencþ*), *wealth*, etc.; *fourth*, *seventh* (in *fifth*, *sixth* the old form was *-te*, and *th* comes after a voiceless sound).

After a short vowel *pith*: in *bath*, *froth* the vowel used to be short; in unstressed syllable *Portsmouth* and other place-names; *twentieth* and other ordinals.

After a long vowel *youth*,<sup>1</sup> *truth*, *sheath*, *beneath* (formerly also with short vowel), *both*.

The voiced sound is retained in *tithe*, *lithe*, *scythe*, *smooth* and a great many verbs like *breathe*, *bathe* (cf. below p. 380). *Wreath* had formerly very frequently [ð], but from the beginning of the 19th c. nearly always [p]. In *bequeath*, *betroth*, *blithe*, *withe*, *booth* the sound is nearly always voiced, though [p] seems to be heard now and then.<sup>2</sup> In some cases analogy has been powerful, see below.

<sup>1</sup> OE *geogub*, like most fem. sbs. it had *-e* added to it in ME, hence the ME voiced sound: AR *zuweðe*, Ch. F 675 *youth* rhyming with *I allow the*.

<sup>2</sup> Sweet HES word-list 2054.

## II.

### *Later Voicing.*

We shall now deal with a phenomenon which forms to some extent a parallel to Verner's famous law for Old Gothic (Germanic).<sup>1</sup> My theory on this was first communicated at a meeting of the Copenhagen Philological Society on Dec. 6. 1888, then printed in *Studier over eng. kases* 1891, p. 178 ff., in part accepted by Herman Møller in *Nord. tidsskrift for filologi* n.r. 10. 311 ff. (1892),<sup>2</sup> completely accepted by Sweet in his *New Engl. Grammar* (1892) p. ix and 279, and re-stated in a somewhat modified form in my *Mod. Engl. Gr. I* (1909) p. 199 ff. Here I shall follow the order of my *Grammar*, but with greater detail, partly already printed in *Studier*.

In 1910 F. Wawra in "Jahres-bericht der landes-oberrealschule in Wiener-Neustadt" printed a paper "Die lautung des englischen intervokalischen s" in which he vigorously polemized against Sweet's Vernerian theory. In spite of a great display of learning and some judicious remarks his criticism is not satisfactory, because (1) he knows only Sweet's short paragraphs and does not take into account my own much fuller treatment, (2) his information on English pronunciation in former and present times is insufficient and not always derived from the best sources, (3) he misses the real point of the whole inquiry and entirely overlooks the fact that *s*, *z* (the only sounds he speaks of) cannot be separated from the other sounds and sound-groups affected by the change, and (4) some of his own explanations are rather fanciful.—W. A. Read, "A Vernerian Sound Change in English", *Engl. Studien* 47.167 ff. (1913) corrects Wawra on some points in favour of my own explanation, he too, speaks exclusively of *s*, *z*, chiefly in the prefix *dis*.—R. A. Williams, *Mod. La. Review* 2.247 ff. (1907) knows the law from Sweet and gives him credit for it, but he, too, speaks of *s* only and does not see that the voicing in *of*, *with*, etc., which he mentions p. 252, is a case in point.

According to my formula the following sounds were changed from voiceless to voiced, roughly speaking between the 15th century and the middle of the 17th:

- (1) *f* > *v*,
- (2) *þ* > *ð*,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the paper above "Verners gesetz und das weichen des akzents".

<sup>2</sup> Some of his critical remarks are due to insufficient information with regard to English pronunciation. Others have been silently taken into account in the following pages.

- (3) s > z,  
 (4) ks > gz,  
 (5) tʃ > dʒ.

Under no circumstances the change took place if a strongly stressed vowel preceded the sound in question. On the whole the conditions were the same for all the sounds named, the chief condition being that they were preceded by a weak vowel, but in details there are small divergencies with regard to the extent to which the change was carried through.

(1) *f*.

(1). *f* > *v* is found in the preposition *of*, which in ME had always [f]. In Elizabethan English we find a distinction according to stress: Eastw. Hoe 453 The sale *of* the poore tenement I tolde thee *off* / Marlowe J 104 Which *of* my ships art thou master *off*?—*Of* the Speranza, Sir. Most of the earliest phoneticians recognize only [f]. Hart (1569) has [ov] as the ordinary form, but also [of] and always [huerof, ðerof]. Mulcaster (1582) is the first to make a distinction between the prep. with *v* and the adv. of distance with *f*. Gill (1621) has [ov] as the natural and [of] as an artificial pronunciation.<sup>1</sup> Now the colourless prep. (as a word of all work) has [v], not only when it is weakly stressed with the vowel [ə], but also when it has (half-)stress and the vowel [ɔ]. Yet *hereof*, *thereof*, *whereof* have [f] alongside of [v]; this is recognized by D. Jones for all three words, by NED only for *thereof*, by Wyld for the first two words, while for *whereof* he gives only [f]. A different spelling is now used for *off*, which is both adv. and prep. with a more pregnant meaning than *of* (*off the coast*, etc.). Another habitually unstressed word is *if*; Hart has both [if] and [iv], Mulcaster only [iv], which is still found in many dialects (Cheshire, Lancash.), also written as a dialectal form in Mrs. Humphrey Ward's *David Grieve* 1.66, etc., while Standard speech has only *if*.

If Fr. adjectives, which in ME had generally *-if* (still Caxton *pensyf*, etc.), have now *-ive*, this may not be due exclusively to weak

<sup>1</sup> Proinde licet frequentius dicamus wið . ov tamen sequamur scribendi consuetudinem tantum: idque quod docti aliqui (NB.) viri sic legunt (NB.) et aliquando (NB.) loquuntur.

stress, as the Fr. fem. *-ive* and the Lat. form operated in the same direction; but these could not prevail after a stressed vowel: *brief*. The law-term *plaintiff* has kept [f], while the ordinary adj. has become *plaintive*. The earlier forms in *-ive* of *bailiff* and *mastiff* (here there are no feminines!) have now disappeared; thus also *caitive* by the side of *caitiff*. Alongside of the old *motive* we have a recent loan *motif* 'artistic theme'. The late loan-word *naïf* hesitated long between *-f* and *-ve*: some writers affect a distinction according to gender as in Fr. In some words the consonant has disappeared, and the ending has been assimilated to the ordinary ending *-y*: *hasty*, *testy*, *jolly*, *tardy* (*massy*).

OE *huswif* has among other forms also *hussive*; with loss of *v* this becomes *bussy*, *buzzy*, while *housewife* is a re-formation of the compound. *Godwif* (*goodwife*) similarly becomes *goody*; I have no quotations for *goodive*.

In *sheriff* from OE *scirgerefa* the form with [f] began to appear in the 14th century and was victorious after a long struggle. It may be due to analogy on account of the numerous words with *v* in the plural and *f* in the singular.

If there are no examples of *f > v* between a weak and a strong vowel, the reason is simply that *f* was not found at all in native words between vowels, except in such words as *before*, *afear'd*, where the feeling of connexion with *for* (*fore*) and *fear* would keep *f* living. There are some Romanic words of the same type, e.g. *refer* (found as early as Chaucer), *affect*, but the tendency to pronounce [v] would here be counteracted by the consciousness of the French and Latin forms, which would be particularly strong in less colloquial words such as *defect*, *affront*, *defer*, etc. The change would, moreover, be at once conspicuous in the spelling, which was not the case with *th* and *s*—and that, too, would make for conservatism.

## (2) *b*.

(2). [*b > ð*] is found in *withb*. It began in combinations like *within*, *without*, *withal*, where the consonant comes between a weak and a strong vowel. Hart (1569) has [ð] here, while otherwise he has both [wið] and [wip] without any apparent rule, though with

preference for [ð] before a voiced sound. The other old phoneticians have generally [wɪp]: Smith 1568, Bullokar 1580 (even *wipout*, *wipin*), Gill 1619 (see above 358 note), Butler 1633 (also *wip-out*, *-in*), Cooper 1685. Sheridan 1780, p. 19, has [p] before consonants, *withstand*, *with many more*, but [ð] before vowels: *without*, *with all my heart*: but this is probably artificial. The voiceless pronunciation is still pretty frequent in *herewith*, *therewith*, *where-with*, *forthwith*, where the syllable is stressed; otherwise the originally weak form [wið] is generalized, though [p] is used by many Scotch, Irish and American speakers.

The verbal ending *-th* comes after a weak vowel in cases like *kisseth*, etc., and here Elizabethan spellings like *promysethe*, *obseruethe* are possibly signs of the sound [ð], which, as it were, paves the way for the ending [z]: but after a short vowel, as in *dotth*, *bath* (often stressed), the sound seems always to have been [p], and this is always now the pronunciation given in reading to the archaic ending *-eth*.

[p] is dropped (after having been first voiced?) in sailors' pronunciation of the weakly stressed first element of *north-west*, *south-west*, often written *nor'west*, *sou'west*, with the derivatives *nor'wester*, *sou'wester*. I find a curious early instance of this in Chaucer's *Parl. of F.* 117, where most MSS have "As wisly as I saw thee north-north-west", but Cambr. Gg has *north nor west*, which I take to be the familiar pronunciation, while Brusendorff (*The Ch Tradition*, p. 288) looks upon it as an individual error.

In the pronominal words *the*, *they*, *them*, *their*, *thou*, *thee*, *thy*, *thine*, *that*, *those*, *this*, *these*, *then*, *than*, *there*, *thither*, *thence*, *thus*, *though* we have now initial [ð]. That the sound was originally [p] exactly as in other words in which OE *þ* corresponds to Aryan *t* (*three*, etc.),<sup>1</sup> is shown, among other things, by the fact that Orm has *t* in these words regularly, not only after words ending in *t*, but also after *d*: e.g. 1037 Off þatt word tatt ' 1094 þatt blod tatt /

<sup>1</sup> In the corresponding Scandinavian words the old pronunciation had [þ], which is still retained in Iceland, though there are some sandhi-forms with [ð], and has become [t] in Faroese, but in the other Scandinavian languages we have now [d] from earlier [ð], a remnant of the voiceless pronunciation is Dan. *ti*, Swed. *ti*. In these pronominal words Frisian, too, has voiced consonants.

greppedd tuss. In an East Anglian vocabulary from 1825 *tan* is given for *than*, though only in the phrase *now and tan*. The form of the definite article *t'* in Yorkshire points in the same direction (if it is not to be explained from the final sound of *hæt*). For *though*, *although* the form [pɔː, ɔːlpɔː] may be frequently heard from educated people in Scotland. Scotch also has initial [p] in *thence*, *thither*.

It is possible that the voicing in these pronominal forms should be separated from the other sound shifts considered in this chapter. When exactly it began is not easy to decide. Chaucerian rhymes like G 662 *sothe : to thee* : G 1294 *by the : swythe* may not prove more than voicing between two vowels, and that may have preceded the voicing in other positions by some time. From ab. 1500 we find Welsh transcriptions with *dd*, i.e. [ð], see Sweet HES § 911. It is worth noting that in *this* and *thus* the initial sound is voiced, but the final *s* is kept voiceless after the strong vowel. For *though* we have a form [pɔf], spelt *tho'f* in Congreve 250 (sailor) and frequent in the 18th c. (Sheridan, etc.) and said to exist still in vulgar speech.

### (3) *s*.

(3) [s>z] is found first in the ending *-es* in the plural, the genitive singular, and the genitive plural of most substantives. Here *e* was sounded in ME, and the development must have been [sunes : sunecz : sunz, sʌnz], spelt *sons*, *son's*, *sons'*. Thus also in the verbal ending (3rd sg. pres. ind.), where it supplants *-th*: [kumes>kumez : kumz, kʌmz], written *comes*. But *s* is not changed after a strong syllable, thus in *dice* (one syllable in Ch C 467, 623, 834), *invoice* (Fr. *envoys*), *quince* (Fr. *coyns*, one syllable in (Ch) Ros. 1374), *trace* (Fr. *traits*): in all of these there has never been a weak *e* before *s*. In the same way we have [s] in the following cases in which *e* had early disappeared: *pence* (one syllable in Ch C 376, 402, 930, Ros. 5987); *twice* (ME *twices* and many other spellings; Ch once T 5.401 in two syllables; orig. pl. of OE *treow*, but early felt as a sg.); *elce* (one syllable Ch B 3105, but in other places two: *ellēs*); *since* (Ch LGW 2560 one syll.); *once*, *twice*, *thrice* (in Ch generally two syll.); *hence*, *thence*, *whence* (in these Ch has one or more often two syllables).

As *s* was thus voiced before the dropping of weak *e*, which did not take place in all cases at the same time, we get pairs of words like the following—I add in parentheses the words given by Sir Thomas Smith as examples of the difference between *s* and *z* in his “De recta & emend. Linguæ Anglicanæ Scriptione”, Lutet. 1568:

dice — dies (*dis* aleæ, *diz* moritur).

else — ells.

false — falls.

fence — fens (*fens* gladiatoria ars, *fenz* loci palustres).

hence — hens (*hens* apage hinc, *henz* gallinæ).

ice — eyes (*is* glacies, *iz* oculi).

lease — lees (cf. *lēs* locationis charta, *lēs* pascua).<sup>1</sup>

lice — lies (*lis* pediculi, *liz* mendacia).

once — ones, one's.

pence — pens.

since — sins.

spice — spies (*spis* aroma, *spiz* exploratores).

When *-es* came after voiceless consonants, as in *lockes*, now *locks*, the series of forms must have been [lokes > lokez > loks] with assimilation as soon as the vowel was dropped.

In a few cases we have remnants of the voiceless pl. ending even after a weak syllable, but chiefly in words where the form is felt and used as a singular, *bodice*, *bellows* pron. [beləs] (alongside of the analogical [belouz]), *gallows*, pronounced by some earlier orthoepists [gæləs]; cf. on the use as sg MEG II 5.712. Gill 1619 makes a curious distinction: *a flouer* flos, *flouerz* flores; at *flouers* menses muliebres, singulari caret.

Voicing after a weak vowel is found in words like *series*, *species* (as well as in plurals like *bases*, *crises*)—in which [z] comes after a long *e* = [iː].

Further it is found in *riches*, ME and Fr *richesse*, in which *-es* now is apprehended as the pl.-ending; the law term *laches* [lætʃiz] is from OFr *lachesse*; cf. also *alms* from *almesse*. *Mistress* before a name is [misiz], though [misis] is also heard; as a separate word it is [mistris].

<sup>1</sup> OE *les*, *leswe*, obsolete



In a certain number of words, which in their present standard forms with [s] appear as exceptions to our rule, pronunciations with [z] are found here and there in old phoneticians or in dialects. Hart gives *treatise* both with [s] and [z]; he and Bullokar have [z] in *purpose*. *Promise* and *sacrifice* had formerly forms with [z], at any rate as verbs (see below III G); similarly *practise*, which was spelt *practize* in Massinger N III.1.52; as a London cockney form I find *praktiz* in "Thenks Awf'ly" (1890). In dialects *Thomas* is [tʊməz]. The ending *-ous* now has always [s], but Hart 1569 has *dezeiruz*, *kuriuz*, *vertiuz* and *vertiuz*, *superfluuz* and *-fliuz*, *notoriuzli*, *komodiuzli*. *Witness* in the same writer is *uitnez*, and according to G. Hempl *business* may still be heard in America as [biznɪz]. In these we have two syllables, but in most of the words in *-ness* we have three, and then *-ness* has more or less of a secondary stress: *readmess*, *thankfulness*, etc., and this may have contributed to the prevailing sound [s]. Similarly *-less*.

In a number of words, however, only [s] is known to me: *duchess*, *burgess*, *mattress* and others in *-ess*; *purchase*; further words like *Atlas*, *basis*, *chaos*, *genius*, all of them with *-s* after a short distinct vowel and most of them learned or late loans.

In such cases we must remember the tendency found in all languages to have voiceless consonants in final position (in anticipation of the voiceless pause). We must also take into consideration here the sandhi-law expressly stated by Hart (see my book on his Pron., p. 14 f., where the interesting passage is quoted in full): he said *iz uel*, *az ani*, *biz o'n*, *diz ue'*, but *is sed*, *as su'n*, *his se'ing*, *ðis salt*, *as fɪr*, *is samfast*, *his fest*, *ðis fɔ'r*, and hints at the same change with *r*, etc. It is well known that in present English final [v, ð, z, ʒ] are not voiced throughout before a pause, see *Lehrb. d. Phon.* 6.64, MEG I 6.93.

In a series of habitually weak words we must presume an old differentiation between one form with [s] and another with [z], parallel to the difference between *off* and *of*: *is*, *his*, *has*, *was*, *as*, now the voiced form is generalized. On Hart see the preceding paragraph. Mulcaster 1582 says that *as* and *was* have [z] "as often" as [s]. Gill nearly always has [z] in all these words, but [was] occurs

sometimes before voiceless consonants. Butler 1633 has only [z] in *as*, *was*, *is*, *his*, thus agreeing with present usage, in which the weak-stress form has completely ousted the form with [s]. Shakespeare rhymes *is* : *kiss* and *this*, *amiss*, and similar rhymes are found as late as Dryden. For OE *us* we should expect a strong form [aus] and a weak [æz]; instead we have [s] in both forms, but a difference in the vowel [ʌs, əs]. Hart has both *us* and *uz*, though the latter is rarer (see my book on H. p. 115). [vz, əz] are common in dialects, see Wright, EDialGr § 328. Curiously enough modern Scotch has a stressed form [hʌz], unstressed *us*, 's, 'z, see Murray, *Dial. of Southern Counties of Scotland*, 1873, 187 f. Grant & Dixon, *Manual of Mod. Scots*, 1921, give both [hʌs] and *huz*, but say nothing of stress. Bernard Shaw gives *huz* several times as a vulgar London form (*Plays f. Pur.* 222, 226, 237, etc.), but this is hardly correct.—OE *eallswa* survives now in two forms, *also* with [s] retained (from *so*), and the weaker *as* with [z] : [æz, əz]. The differentiation began early: Ancrene Riwe has *also* used as the modern word, but otherwise *alse*, *ase*, *as*; that they were felt as two separate words, is seen p. 62 also *also* dead com into þe worlde þurh sunne, also þurh eie þurles ... In a comparison the first 'as' has regularly stronger stress than the second; we see this in a great many cases though with varying forms, e.g. AR 2 also wel also ' 96 also sone ase ' 38 also wis ase (but 90 ase quite ase ' 84 as ofte ase) / Ayenb. also moche ase, also moche ase, also moche ase / Chaucer MP 3.1064 also hardy as / C 806 also sone as / MP 4.69 als faste as<sup>1</sup> / London E. 195 als moche as ' 196 als ofttymes as he is ... als wel as / Caxton R 20 the mone shyneth also light as it were day / 71 also ferre as he be, also 77, 116 (but 71 of as good birthe as i am / 116 as holsom counseyl as shal be expedient) / Malory 35 also soone as / Marlowe Jew 565 thinke me not all so fond As negligently to forego so much / Gill (1621) as long az I liv. Compare with this mod. Sc. aass quheyte az snaa, Murray, *Dial.* 226.

With regard to the position between a weakly and a strongly stressed vowel we have few instances of the transition in purely

<sup>1</sup> Chaucer has the form *als* 'also', rhyming with *falt*, Hous of F. 2071

native words, for the same reason as in the case of *f* (above p. 359): words like *aside*, *beside*, *beset* would naturally keep [s], because they were felt to contain *side*, *set*, which had no inducement to voice the initial sound. The only native word, then, in which the change took place is *howsoever*; Cooper 1685 says "Facilitatis causa dicitur *howzever* pro *howsoever*", and the [z]-forms *-zeer*, *-ziver*, *-zivver* are still found in Yorkshire and other places, see *Engl. Dial. Dict.* (In Standard English the word used is, of course, *however*).

In French (and orig. Latin) words the sound [s] was frequent in this position. Voicing occurred in accordance with our formula in the following cases, in which Fr had [s]: *design* [di zain], Fr *dessiner*, *dessert* [di zə't], Fr *dessert*, *resemble* [ri'zembl], Fr *ressembler*, *resent* [ri zent] Fr *ressentir*, *possess* [pə zes], *possession* [pə zɛʃən], cf. Fr *posséder*, *possession*, *absolve* [əb zɔlv] Fr *absolv-*, *observe* [əb'zə:v], Fr *observer*. The voiceless [s] is preserved in *absolution*, because [bs] followed after a half-strong vowel, but in *observation* and *observer* [z] is due to the analogy of *observe*.

It is worth noting that all the words in which we have [z] from [s]—as well as all the instances of [v, ð, dʒ] according to our formula—belong to popular strata of our language, while many of the exceptions are more or less book-words.

In some cases the [z]-pronunciation has not prevailed completely. *Absorb* has [z] more rarely than [s] (D. Jones); *resorb* vacillates. *Absurd*, is generally [əb sə'd], but [z] may be heard occasionally, at any rate in U. S. The river and state *Missouri* has [z] more often than [s] in U. S. (see especially Read in *Engl. St.* 47.169 ff.). In U. S. I have also heard *persistent* with [z]. *December* has [z] in Scotland (Murray). G. Eliot makes Bob Jakin say "twelve per zent". *Deceive* has [z] dialectally. For Fr *pucelle* there is a form *puzel*, found a couple of times in Sh H6 A and elsewhere in the 16th c. *Philosophic(al)* had [z] in a long series of pronouncing dictionaries up till about the middle of the 19th century and still in the pronunciation of Sweet, Jeaffreson & Boensel and Miss Soames; now only [s] seems to be recognized, which is easily understood from the learned character of the word as well as from *philosophy*, in which [s] comes after the stressed vowel.

We must specially mention a few prefixes. *Dis-* regularly became

[diz] before a stressed vowel: *disaster*, *disease*, *disown*, also *dissolve* and *discern*, while [s] was kept unchanged after secondary stress: *disagree*, *disadvantage*, *disappear*, *disobey*, as well as before a voiceless consonant: *displease*, *distrust*, *discourage*, *disfigure*, etc. But there is a good deal of uncertainty and a strong tendency to pronounce [dis], because the prefix was and is felt as an independent element, which may be added to almost any word whose meaning allows of it. Walker 1774 had the regular *disable* [z], but *disability* [s]; now [s] is generally heard in *disable*. *Disorder*, *dishonour*, *dishonest*, which formerly had regularly [z], have now generally [s]; [s] even begins to be heard in *discern*, the first dictionary to recognize this is probably Wyld's. [s] is nearly always heard before a voiced consonant: *dislike*, *dismount*, *disrupt*, etc., though [z] is sometimes heard in *disdain*, *disguise*, *disgust*, *disgrace*, *dismay*, *dismiss*.

The prefix *trans-* has according to our rule [z] in *transact*, *-action*, but [s] in *transitive* and *transient*; but [s] may rarely be heard in the former words also. In *transition* besides the regular [-ziʃən] we have now [-sizən] with a curious transposition of the voice. Before consonants we have [s], though [z] may also be found in a few words, *translate*, *-gress*. (The vowel in the first syllable vacillates between [aː] and [æ]).—The prefix *mis-* is always sounded [mis]; it is felt as an independent element and generally has half-strong stress.

In many words it is easy to see that [s] has been kept unchanged on account of association with a word in which the sound was initial, thus *assure*, cf. *sure*, *decease*, cf. *cease*, *presentiment*, cf. *sentiment* (NED has [s], but "nine people out of ten" have [z], says H. W. Fowler; Jones has both sounds, Wyld only [z]), *research*, cf. *search*, *resource*, cf. *source* (but in both these [z] is heard according to R. A. Williams).

Many exceptions to our rule may be explained as spelling-pronunciations or, which often amounts to the same thing, as late or renewed, deliberate (more or less learned) loans from French or Latin, thus especially words spelt with *ss*, *sc*, or *c*, e.g. *assail*, *assist*, *disciple*, *ascendant*, *-cy*, *descend*, *deceive*, *deception*, *receive*, *precise*.

With regard to words spelt with *c* there is a possibility of the sound having been [ts] in French, or at any rate different from the

ordinary [s].<sup>1</sup> On the whole the right appreciation of the development in English of *s* in this position is made difficult through our ignorance of French sounds in the older period. Latin *s* seems to have been voiceless in all positions (Seelmann, *Ausspr. des Lat.* 1885 302ff., Kent, *The Sounds of Latin*, 1932, p. 57): I am not, of course, speaking of that prehistoric intervocalic *s* which in historic times appears as *r*. When exactly Latin intervocalic *s* became voiced in French (and in northern Italian) there seems to be no means of discovering, as the spelling has invariably *s*. In many words in which modern E. [z] might have been produced by the English change here discussed the sound was probably [z] in Fr before the word was taken over, thus in some words with *dis-* and in the following with *re-*: *resign*, *resolve*, *reserve*, *resound* (? *resort*, OFr *resortir*, but now *ressortir*),<sup>2</sup> further *deserve*, *desiderate*, *design*, *desire*, *desist*.

The difficulty is increased by the fact that ModE in some cases has [s], where we should expect *z* if the Fr pronunciation had been decisive. Thus after a strong vowel: *suffice* (note the spelling from the Latin) formerly had [z], agreeing with Fr *suffis(ant)* and was also sometimes spelt with *z* (e.g. Massinger N IV. 3.42). Most early dictionaries give [z], but from the middle of the 19th c. [s] begins to appear, and it seems to be the chief, or even only, form used nowadays. *Nuisance* has [s], but Fr *nuisant* has [z]. The endings *-osity* (*curiosity*), *-sive* (*decisive*), *-sory* (*illusory*) have [s] in spite of Fr [z]. In the ending *-son* after a weak vowel both Fr pronunciation and our formula would make us expect [z], and that is found in *venison* [ven(ɪ)zən]; *orison* was spelt with *z* in Sh. Haml. III. 1.89, and this pronunciation is still heard (Wyld among others), though most recent dictionaries give [s]; *benison* similarly was sometimes spelt with *z* (Sh. Lr I. 1.269) and both [s] and [z] were and are found, but the word is really obsolete (N.B. OFr had written forms in *-çun*, *-çon*, *-s(s)on*, *-zon*). *Garrison*, formerly sometimes spelt with *z*, is now always pronounced with [s], as is also

<sup>1</sup> Cp. instances like the following in which *c* goes back to *tr* and has kept the voiceless sound: *menace*, *notice*, *patience*, *science* (but some dialects have [sarənz])

<sup>2</sup> These are in E felt as simple words, but in new-formations with *re-*, stressed [rɪ], meaning 'again' we have, of course [s]: *re-sign*, *re-serve*, *re-volve*, etc. This distinction was noted by Elphinstone 1765.

*comparison*. On the other hand *prison*, *reason*, *season* and others go with Fr in having [z]. In the ending *-sy* we have [z] in some old words: *frenzy* < *phrenesy*, *palsy* [pɔ:lzi] < *paralysy*, *quinzy* < *quinasy*. In the similarly contracted *fancy* < *phantasy* and *courtesy*, *curtsy* [kə:tsi] the voiceless sound must be due to the *t*. In *jealousy* [s] may be due to *jealous*: *apostasy*, *heresy*, *hypocrisy*, *leprosy* with [s] are learned words, and in such *s* was always pronounced [s]; cf. also *desolate*, *desecrate*, *desiccate*, *desultory* (all of them with [s] after a strong vowel).

(4) *ks*.

(4). The voicing [ks > gz] is only a special case of (3); I write here [gz] though the voicing of the stop is not always complete: some phoneticians transcribe [gz], others [kz]. In the first place this change is found in some words with the prefix *ex-* before a strong vowel: *exact*, *examine*, *example*, *exemplify*, *executive*, *executor*, *exert*, *exertion*, *exhale*, *exhaust*, *exhibit*, *exhilarate*, *exhort*, *exhume* (in these *h* is mute), *exist*, *exorbitant*, *exordium*, *exotic*, *exude*, *exult*. As *x* is pronounced [gz] in Fr, one might suppose that the E pronunciation was simply due to the Fr, but it is evident that the two phenomena are mutually independent, because (a) the E voiced sound is exclusively found after a weak vowel, while Fr has [gz] also in the class of words that we are now going to consider, in which E has [ks], and (b) because E has the same change in words that do not begin with *ex-* and which in Fr have always [ks]. That the E phenomenon is dependent on stress is shown by the following words having [ks] after a stressed vowel (main stress or secondary stress): *execute* (whence also *executer*), *exercise*, *exhalation*, *exhibition* (whence *exhibitioner*), *exhortation* (these, too, with mute *h*), *exorcize*, *exultation*. The noun *exile* is always [eksail], the verb either [ig'zail] or [eksail]; the adj. *exile* is always [ig'zail].

Outside this prefix we have the voicing in *Alexander*, *anxiety* [æŋ'zaiti] (but *anxious* [æŋ(k)ʃəs]), *luxurious* and *luxuriance* (in which [gzj] has in the pronunciation of many become [gʒ]) (but *luxury* with [ksj] or [kʃ]). *Hexameter*, *hexagonal* have often [gz], but *hexagon* (stress on the first syllable) only [ks]. *Auxiliary* has [gz] much more often than [ks]; *axillary* is found with both

pronunciations. According to D. Jones *proximity*, *Quixotic*, *taxation* and *uxorious* have [kz] by the side of [ks]; Wyld has [kz] in the last word only. It cannot surprise us that *vexation* has [ks] from *vex*, and that such a learned word as *doxology* has only [ks].<sup>1</sup>

I do not know at what time *x* was voiced in English. Hart 1569 has *eksampl*.<sup>1</sup>

Final *x* is not voiced: *Essex*. Nor is [ks] voiced in words spelt with *c*: *except*, *accept*, *success* (*access* often stress on the first syllable).

(5). *tʃ*.

(5). The transition [tʃ > dʒ], which is often though not always shown in the spelling is found first in some cases in final syllables: *knowleche* (thus Ch, Caxton) > *knowledge*; Stratmann quotes *knawlage* from Perceval (15th c.); Cath. Angl. (1483) has *knaulledge* both as sb. and. vb., *knowledge* is found in Latimer, Bale (16th c.), More U 220, etc. Hart, Gill, etc. have only the voiced form.

ME *partriche* (in Ch stressed on the second, later on the first syllable), Caxton R 49 *partrychs* > *partridge*, thus nearly always in Elizabethan times, though Ben Jonson has *partrich* (Volp. IV.2). ME *cabach*, *caboche*, in NED with *ch* as late as 1688, but with *-ge* as in mod. *cabbage* as early as 1570; Hargreaves gives [kabitʃ] in Adlington (Lancash.). An obsolete verb *caboche* (OFr *cabocher*) 'cut off the head of a deer' has *ch* in NED 1425, but as early as 1530 *kabage*. *Carriage* in the meaning 'vehicle' is derived from, or at any rate influenced from, *caroche*, Fr *carroche*, It *carrocio*. Fr *cartouche* > *cartridge*, oldest ex. in NED 1579 *cartage*; besides this form with initial stress we have a later loan *cartouche* with final stress. *Eldritch* (chiefly Sc.) 'weird, ghostly' has forms with *-age* in the 16th c. (*Galosh*, *-che* has subsidiary forms in *-ge*, probably stressed on the first syllable). *Ache* 'pain' sb. had formerly the sound [tʃ] (while the vb had and has [k])—a dialectal compound is *eddag* = 'headache'. From the other word *ache* (apium) we have

<sup>1</sup> *Sample* from *example*. and *Saunder* from *Alexander* may have been developed before the voicing of *x* in the full words.

*smallage*. ME *luvesche* (ligusticum levisticum) has become *lovage*. From OFr *lavache* 'deluge of rain' we have an obsolete form *lava(i)ge*; if *lavish* has become the standard form the reason is assimilation to the adj. ending *-ish*. MĒ *oystryche*, *ostriche* > *ostridge* (thus or *estridge* in Sh.); Mulcaster 1582 has *ostridge* or *estridge*; Lyly has *austrich* in the first ed. of *Euphues* 1580, p. 341, but in the second ed. 1582 *ostridge*; now the spelling is *ostrich*, but the sound [-idʒ] is probably still more frequent than [-itʃ]. The plant-name *orach(e)* is found with *-ge* in earlier times (NED 1430, 1440), thus also Butler 1633. *Spinach* (Lat. *spinacea*) is pronounced [spinidʒ] much more frequently than [-itʃ]; the spelling *spinage* is found as early as 1530, but the same spelling is found in OFr alongside of *-ache*. By the side of *stomacher* we find the form *-ager*; Walker gives the pronunciation "*stum-mid-je*", but the pronunciation with [k], cf. *stomach*, has prevailed (Jones, Wyld); the word is archaic. *Sausage* seems to be found in English with *-ge* only, but it comes from OFr *saussiche*.

We have the same transition in a great many place-names in *-wich*; in these [w] has disappeared as in the corresponding forms in *-wick*: *Greenwich* [grinidʒ], *Harwich* [hæridʒ], *Norwich* [nɔridʒ], *Bromwich* [brʌmidʒ], *Woolwich* [wulidʒ]. The official spelling is changed in some names which contain the same ending: *Guttridge*, *Cowage*, *Swanage* (from *Swanawic*). *Sandwich*: "The place-name ... [sænwitʃ], but some say [sænwidʒ] and some say [sænidʒ]" (D. Jones, *Engl. Phonetics*, 3rd ed. 1932, 150). In the common name ('slices of bread with meat' etc.) [-widʒ] is probably more common than [-witʃ], though some authorities deny this. But *Ipswich* and *Droitwich* are [ipswitʃ], [droitwitʃ]. Are these forms spelling-pronunciations, as I thought formerly, probably in accordance with most phoneticians? This seems doubtful, for why should the spelling have been more influential in these than in other names? There may be a purely phonetic reason, namely that while in all the other names the result of the dropping of [w] is a perfectly smooth phonetic form, short vowel + single consonant before the ending, this is not the case in *Sandwich*, *Ipswich*, *Droitwich*, where the heavier sound-group (possibly with half-stress on the ending)



would therefore tend to preserve both [w] and the final voiceless sound.<sup>1</sup>

*Aldrich* is generally pronounced [ɔldridʒ] in England, but I have heard [-ɪʃ] in America. (Mod. *Aldersgate* in London is ME *Aldrichesgate*, London E. 48).

A different development of *-ich* in weak syllable is found in *every*, ME *everich(e)* from OE *æfre ælc*, and in adjectives and adverbs in *ly* < *-lic*, *-liche*, as well as in the pronoun OE *ic* > *I*.

Between a weak and a strong vowel [tʃ] has become [dʒ] in *ajar* from the OE sb *cerr*, *cierr* 'turn'. NED has *on char* 1513 and *at jar* 1708 (Swift); the spelling in one word *ajar* is there only exemplified from 1786 on. Note Dickens *Pickw.* 381, where Mrs. Cluppins says, "when I see Mrs. Bardell's street door on the jar", which the little judge does not understand and has to have explained "partly open". In Sherriff's "The Fortnight in September" (T) 45 I find "the scullery window's ajar ... the window's just left on the jar", cf. NED.

Under *jowl*, *jole* 'jawbone, jaw' NED gives as etymology OE *ceafl*, ME *cheafl*, *chefl*, *chæfl*, *chaue* and other forms, and then adds: "The later *jowle*, *jowl*, *joul*, *joll*, *jole* is not a regular development ... The origin of the *j* ... is at present unaccounted for". Is it too fanciful to think, as I suggested in 1891, that *j* arose here (as in *ajar*) in a fixed combination, in which [tʃ] came between a weak and a strong vowel, namely *cheek by jowl*, which, as a matter of fact, is used more often in colloquial speech than the word by itself. According to NED *j* appears in this phrase earlier (1577) than elsewhere. It is interesting to note that some dialects have re-established the alliteration by forming *jig by jowl* (see EDD): The question is complicated by the existence of two other words *jowl*, in NED treated as separate, and by the coexistence of the forms *chaw* and *jaw*, which are synonyms of *jowl*.

Independently of our formula, thus independently of stress, we have alternation of [tʃ] and [dʒ] in some words of more or less clearly onomatopoeic character: *splotch* : *splodge* | *smutch* : *smudge* | ME *grucchen* : *grudge* | *botch* : *bodge* | *catch* : *cadge* | *chunk* : *junk*.

<sup>1</sup> The local form for Birmingham "Brummagem" is sometimes supposed to be developed from \**Bromwicham*, which has never been discovered to exist; Zachrisson explains the [dʒ] from \**ingja*.

The sound [ʃ] by itself has not been voiced in the same conditions as [tʃ]; thus we have till this day *finish*, *parish*, *English*, *foolish* and many others. This is evidently connected with the fact that at the time when the voicing took place in the other instances, the voiced sound corresponding to [ʃ], namely [ʒ], was not found as an independent phoneme in the language, but existed only in the group [dʒ]. But in some cases final [ʃ] was voiced, though then in the form of [dʒ]. *Skirmish* is found as *skirmige*, -age from 1567 on, see NED. This has become the well-known sporting term *scrimmage*. Samuel Pegge, *Anecd. of the E. Lang.*, 1803, p. 68, writes: "*Skrimidge*, for *skirmish*. 'Skrimage' is jocularly used for *skirmish*, by Dr. Johnson, in his 239th Letter to Mrs. Thrale. It is a sort of rule with the Cockney to convert the -isk [sic, for -ish] into -idge, and the same with other similar terminations. Besides *skrimidge*, they have *radidges* for *radishes*, *rubbidge* for *rubbish*, *furbidge* for *furbish*, &c." Most of these are still found dialectally or vulgarly; *rubble* thus in Caine, *Manxm.* 305, and Galsworthy, *Fors. Change* 41. Of course, the existence of the common suffix -age, pron. [idʒ], as in *passage*, *peerage*, etc. has been a concurrent cause of the change in such words.

On the other hand, northern dialects have forms in -itch for -age (*parritch*) in accordance with the universal tendency to unvoice final sounds

When did the changes from voiceless to voiced which we have here been considering take place? Hardly all at the same time; for [tʃ > dʒ] we have, as mentioned, evidence in the spelling from the fifteenth century, but for the other changes spelling teaches us practically nothing. [ð] in pronominal words may be pretty early. With regard to [s] it should be noted that the early phoneticians have [s] in some cases where we now have [z], thus Hart (1569) has *observe* and *example* with s. But the voicing must have begun at about the same time: Mulcaster (1582) has [z] in *deserve*, *preserve* (and *conserve*, which now has [s]). Gill (1619, 1621) has [z] in *desert*, *resort*, (as well as *preserve*, *presume*; both [s] and [z] in *deserve*), but he has voiceless sounds in all compounds with *dis-*,

in *ex-* (and in *resist*, printer's error?). On [z] in weak words see above, p. 363. We cannot be far wrong in thinking that the transition to voiced sounds had for the greater part been finished before the middle of the 17th century; later phoneticians agree nearly everywhere with present usage.

There is a phenomenon which to some extent offers a parallel to the voicing dealt with in this chapter, in so far as a transition to the voiced sound is found in weakly stressed syllables, but not in strong ones, namely the distinction some speakers make between [hw] or [w̥] in an emphatic *what?* / *why?* and [w] in *whatever* / *why the dickens*, etc. See MEG I. 13.51. But this distinction, which is far from universal, is probably much younger than the shifts of *f*, *th*, *s*; note also that here the voiceless sound is retained before, not after the strong vowel.

### III.

#### *The Role of Voice in the Grammatical System.*

We have seen above that in OE the voice or absence of voice in the three fricatives *f/v*, *p/ð* and *s/z* was in the vast majority of cases regulated perfectly mechanically according to position in the word: initially and finally voiceless, medially voiced.<sup>1</sup> The presence or absence of voice could not, therefore, be used to distinguish words; in modern linguistic parlance, the sounds [f] and [v] were not separate phonemes, but members of the same phoneme, characterized as labiodental fricative [f/v], and similarly [p/ð] and [s/z] respectively.

In ModE this is totally different in consequence of a series of historical happenings, so that now [f] and [v], [p] and [ð], [s] and [z] are in every way to be considered separate phonemes, capable of distinguishing words, e.g. *fine* : *vine*, *leaf* : *leave*, *thigh* : *thy*, *teeth* : *teethe*, *zeal* : *seal*, *ice* : *eyes*. This has been brought about through (1) the importation of a great many words, chiefly French, beginning with voiced fricatives, e.g. *vain*, *zone*, or having voiceless sounds medially, e.g. *defend*, *descend*; (2) the adoption of a few words with initial [v] from those southern dialects that changed

<sup>1</sup> Exceptions are only found in immediate contact with voiceless stops, as in *æfter*, *blips* (later *bliss*), *be(t)ta*, *uacan*, *weaxan*, *fiscere*; and then in a few instances of geminated voiceless sounds, e.g. *pyffan*, *offrian*, *sceppan*, *moppe*, *cyssan*, *assa*.

[f] to [v], e.g. *vat*, *vixen*. (3) the loss of final *-e* made a number of voiced fricatives final which owe their voice to their medial position: *love*, *bathe*, *rise*, etc. (4) the changes considered above in ch. II made some final voiceless sounds voiced, as in *of*, *with*, *sons*, *as*, and on the other hand made some initial sounds voiced, e.g. *the*, *this*.<sup>1</sup>

We shall now see how the distinction between these voiceless and voiced sounds is utilized in the English grammatical system.<sup>2</sup>

### A. Plural.

The plural of substantives in OE *-as*, ME *-es*, now according to circumstances *-es* or *-s*.

Here we have the regular alternation, e.g. in AR 174 *þeof*, pl. *þeoues* / 212 *knif*, pl. *kniues*, and we must assume that the same alternation took place with *þ*, *ð*, and *s*, *z*, though it is not apparent in the writing. In Ch we have *-f*, pl. *-ves*, though sometimes the MSS have pl. forms like *wyfes*, *archewiffes*. Similar forms are found now and then in texts from the 14th and following centuries, e.g. London E 200 *sugar loofys*, Mandev. 113 *thefes*, 173 *knyfes*, 176 *lyfes*, 179 *wyfes* (but 98 *loves*) / More U 156, 225 and other places *wyfes* (but elsewhere *wyues*), 247 *wulfes*; in some cases one edition has *-fes*, and the other *-ves*. *Turf* now has pl. *turfs*, Ch E 2235 *turves* (still in Wharton's Grammar 1655), More U 29 *torues*, but 280 *turfes*. OE *clif*, pl. *cleofu* is split up into two words, *cliff*, pl. *cliffs* (Ch MP 3.161 *cliffes*) and *cle(e)ve*. In *nerve*, ME *nerf* as in Fr, *v* is due to Latin rather than to the pl.

The only Fr words in which this alternation has survived, is *beef*, *beeves*; but formerly here and there *-ves* was found, where *-fs* is now universal: Caxton R 64 *kerchienis*, More U 245 *mischeues*, Ascham S 78 *mischieues*, Bale 3 Lawes 1156 *myscheues*, but early quotations for *mischiefs* are found in London E 97, Sh sometimes in the quartos *griueues*, *greeueues*.

<sup>1</sup> See also on these new phonemes my paper on *Monosyllabism in English*.

<sup>2</sup> The following pages do not give all the material collected in the thesis of 1891, as I hope to be able to deal fully with all these things as far as they concern ModE in the morphological volume of my Modern English Grammar, the MS of great parts of which has been ready for some years.

In some words forms in *-ves* and analogical forms in *-fs* have long been struggling for predominance: *hooves*, *hoofs*, *wharves*, *wharfs*, etc.

Sg. in [p], pl. in [ðz], is found in many words after a long vowel, *paths*, etc. *Clothes*, the regular pl. of *cloth*, is now rather to be regarded as a separate word, (mass-word), the old pronunciation is [klouz]—and a new pl. is formed, *cloths*, with varying pronunciation, as in other similar forms. After a short vowel and a consonant [ps] is sounded: *deaths*, *months*, thus also *births*, etc.

The only surviving instance in standard English of sg [s], pl [ziz] is *house*. Hart gives z in the pl. of *use*. Nowadays *faces*, *places*, *prices* with [ziz] are said to be very common colloquially in the Midlands and elsewhere.

### B. Genitive.

The gen. in *-es*, now *-s*, must have had the same voice change as the pl., though I am able to demonstrate it for *f* only. The gen. of *wife* was always *wyues* in Ch and Caxton; *wiues* is also regularly written in Sh and the Bible, though modern editions 'correct' into *wife's*, which is found as early as More U 300. The last trace of the old form that I know of is Walker 1791 § 378 "we often hear of a wifes jointure".

*Life*: AR 190 *his lues ende*, Ch (always) *lyves*, Sh has both forms.

*Staff*: the old gen. was kept in the phrase *at the staues ende*, Ch MP 7.184, Sh Tw V. 292.

*Wolf*: no later example of gen. *wulues* is known to me than Caxton R 76 (but 53, 96, 106 *wulfis*).

*Knife*: Sh has twice *a kniues point*.

*Calf*: Sh has some instances of *calues*, and this gen. is found till this day in compounds (used by butchers and housewives), like *calve's-head*, *calve's-foot* and others.

The voiced genitives had naturally greater power of resistance in fixed compounds; in free combinations *-f's* has long been universal.

C. *Dative.*

The only other case of interest to us in this connexion is the dative sg. AR has *of wulue* (252), *steue* (200) and *steaue* (290) from *stef* (290) 'staff'; we must accordingly assume the voiced sound in *of þe muðe* (80), *to muðe* (88), but forms without *-e* and accordingly with voiceless sound occur also: *mid muð* (186). We have *under rof* (142) and *under roue* (150), cf. Ch HF 1949 *on the rove*. Some vacillation, which may be connected with the gender of the word, is found in AR with *half* 'side': *a godes halue* (22, 104), *a godes half* (58), *of godes half* (106), *on eueriche halue* (50), *on ilchere half* (132), *an oðer half* (often), *in þere vorme half* (158), both forms immediately one after the other p. 112 and 304. Ch has generally *half*, MP 3.370 *a goddes halfe*, but also *on youre bihalve* (B 2985, T 2.1458), *on my behalfe* (LGW 497). Caxton R 41 *on your behalue*. London E 32 *on the kyngges half*, cf. 96, 97; *on ... behalve* 65, 82, 98.—Ch LGW 439 *of wyve*, 2573 *upon his righte wyve*, but 520 *of this wyf* (: *in her lyf*). London E 214 *to Alys my wyue*, 215 *of Alys my wyue*.—The only word in which the *v*-dative has been preserved is *alive*, OE *on life*; the same form was formerly used in other combinations, e.g. AR 38 *to blisfule liue*, etc., Ch LGW 434 *in al his lyve*, etc. Cf. Scotch *belive* = Ch *blyve* 'fast', OE *be life*.

 D. *Adjectives.*

Adjective inflexions. OE words like *leof*, *laþ*, *wis* naturally had voiced consonants in all the inflected forms, as well as in the derived adverbs in *-e*. In AR we have the original alternation kept in 46 *ðe halue dole* | 412 *þet oðer halue ȝer* | Ch uses G 286 *they been deve* (rhyming with *to leve*), pl. of *deef* 'deaf'.—The most important word is *leof*; in AR we have, for instance, 250 *leof freond ... his leoue ureond* (Morton erroneously *freond*, corrected by Kölbing) ... *leouere*. Ch C 760 *leef* rhyming with *theef* | F 572 *Ne never hadde*

<sup>1</sup> NED thinks that *grave*, OE *græf* owes its *v* to the especially frequent occurrence in the dative. [?] No such reason is given s. v. *grove*, OE *grōf*. In *glove*, OE *glōf* and *bive*, OE *bȳf*, *v* is due to the usual ME addition of *-e* in fem. nouns.

*I thing so leef, ne lever*, thus innumerable times; in the 'vocative' generally *leve brother*, etc., but HF 1827 *Lady, lefe and dere!* the comp. is *levere*, but exceptionally LGW 75 *leefer* in the A-version, in B 191 *lever*. Later there is a good deal of uncertainty; alongside of *lief* we find *lieue*, *liue* in Sh. (e.g. Cor. IV. 5. 186), Swift T 127 *I had as lieue*. In the 19th century the word is used as an archaism only, and with great vacillation, *lief*, *lieve*, *leeve*, and in the comparative *liever*, *liefer* (both these forms in Tennyson). *Stiff* is from the uninflected form (but the short vowel is exceptional, as we must suppose that OE *stif* had long *i*); Mod Sc *steere* (comparative *steever* Scott, Ant. 2.109) is from the inflected form of ME *stef*.—With regard to *th*, *loth* (*loath*) and *worth* have their [p] from the uninflected, but *smooth* its [ð] from the inflected forms, or rather from the originally adverbial form, for the adj. was *smæðe*, *smeðe* (cf. *swete* adj., *swote* adv.).—*Wise* with [z] is from the inflected form; Ch A 309 had sg. *wys* rhyming with *parvys*, but 313 pl. *wyse*, rhyming with *assyse*; cf. E 603, 695, 740, G 496, 553. Wallis (1653) p. 79 and 80 has *wise* with a long *s*, which he uses for the voiceless sound, and this is still found in Scotch dialects, see Murray 126.—The Fr words *safe* and *close* have voiceless sounds.

We may here mention also *self*. In ME we find *him self* alongside of *him selue* (orig. the dative), *hir self* and *hir selue*, *hem self*, *hemselves* and other forms. In *thy self*, etc., *self* is treated as a sb., and later we find the now usual forms *ourselves*, *themselves*, etc.

### E. Numerals.

Numerals had formerly two forms, distinguished in the same way as in North German colloquial speech, where a form in *-e* is used when the word stands alone (as primary), and the shorter form as secondary: *zehne* : *zehn kinder*, *fünfe* (often pronounced *fymvə*) : *fünf mark*. Thus in AR *tene* (46 alone): *þe ten hesten* (28) / *sixe* (298): *six stucchenes* (298) and with consonantal alternation *þeos fiue* (18), *ðe vormeste viue* (18, 22), *þe oðer viue* (22): *fif siðen* (18), *fif auez* (18) / *tene oðer tweolue* (200; 424) : *tweolf apostles*.<sup>1</sup> In the same way in Ch, e.g. F 391 *with fiue or six* / F 383

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the distinction in AR between *seouene* (24, alone) and *seoue psalmes*; *alle niene* (22). *nre lescuns* (22), now *seren*, *nine* with *n* from the primary forms.

*twelue* (primary, rhyme *hir selue*); cf. G 675, 1002 : B 3602 *fyf yeer*; B 3845 and E 736 *twelf yeer*; sometimes, however, as in G 555 *fyve myle*; always perhaps *fyve and twenty yeer* (A 2173, B 12). In later times the originally primary forms were the only ones preserved: *five*, *twelve*.

### F. Derivatives.

In derivatives from words ending in one of the three voiceless fricatives we have very often voiced consonants, but it is quite natural that voiceless consonants have been introduced analogically. We shall take each ending separately.

Adjs. in *-y*: here we see voiced consonants in traditional words and voiceless in analogical new-formations, thus *leavy* (Sh. Mcb. V. 6.1, Ado II. 3.75, rhyme *heavy*; Milton Co. 278), now *leafy*; *scurvy* subsists, but in the sense 'mean, contemptible' it is not so directly associated with *scurf* as *scurfy*. Both *shelvy* (Sh.) and *shelfy* occur; *turfy*. *Th* is voiced in *worthy*, *mouthy*, but voiceless in most cases: *pithy*, *earthy*, *lengthy*, etc. *Lousy* has [z]—thus also generally *greasy*, though it is from a Fr word; D. Jones says that many speakers have [z] and [s] in different meanings.

Adjs. in *-ish*. *Wolvish* (Bale Thre L. 1073, 1211, Sh.), now *wolfish*. *Thievish* has prevailed over *thiefish*; *elvish* and *elfish* are both found, thus also the rare *wivish* and *wifish*; *dwarfish* (Marlowe, Sh.), *selfish*.

Adjs. in *-less*: the old form was *liveless* (Dekker F 1229, Sh. and Milton always), but *lifeless* has prevailed. Malory 37 has *wyueless*, but the prevailing form *wifeless* is as old as Ch (E 1235). *Clotheless*, see NED.

Adjs. in *-ly*: *v* is preserved in *lively*; *wifely* has prevailed over *wively*. Adv. in *-ly* follow the sound of the adj.: *wisely*, *safely* (but London Engl. 67 *sauely*).

Adjs. in *-ed*: *long-lived*, *short-lived*, always written thus, but the pronunciation is not so certain; the usual pronunciation seems to be [-livd] (thus Professors Mawer, Moore Smith; D. Jones s. v. short-lived), but H. W. Fowler says that the right pron. is [-laivd], "the words being from *life* & not from *live*". But in *high-lived* and *low-lived* (both in Goldsmith 17, 22) one would say [-laivd], as also



in "some hundred-wived kinglet" (Kingsley Hyp. 239). *Round-leaved* more frequent than *-leafed*; both *hoofed* (Kipl. J 2.98 sharp-hoofed) and *-hooved* are found. Words in *-thed* (wide-mouthed, etc.) have no fixed pronunciation [-ðd] or [pt].

Verbs in *-en*: *deafen*, *loosen* and the rare *smoothen*, *blithen* have the same consonant as the adj., *lengthen* and *strengthen* as the sb.

Adjs. in *-en*: *brazen*, *glazen*, from *brass*, *glass*. But *earthen* has the voiceless sound. *Heathen* is not felt as a derivative of *heath*.

Adjs. in *-ern*: *northern*, *southern* [ð].

Adjs. in *-ous*: change in *grievous*, *mischievous* (Fr, cf. above p. 374).

Sbs in *-er*: *heather* [heðə] is hardly felt now as derived from *heath* [hi·p]. A 'lifer' is used for one who is sentenced to prison for life; London V 76 has "the low-lifers". Most words in *-er* are derived from verbs and have the same cons. as these. Thus also *thievery*, but note *housewifery*, in Greene FB and elsewhere *huswifery*; *smithery* has [p], NED. Note *glazier*, *grazier*, *clothier* [ð].

Various other instances: *wolverine*, *elfin*, *wharfage*, *selvage* or *selvedge* (MDu *selfegge*); *thiefdom* or *thievery*; *wifehood*, *wivehood*.

### G. Verbs.

In the verbs, too, there were alternations, but here the voiced sounds were from the first in the majority, because most of the OE endings were vocalic. Final consonants were found only in the imperative (sg.), e.g. AR 274 *drif* (cf. 244 *driuende*) and in the strong preterits, e.g. AR *gef* (but pl. *geuen*)<sup>1</sup>; this is still found in the fifteenth c., e.g. Malory 75, 156 *drofe* | 94 *gaf*, 121 *gafe* | 115, 122 *clafe* | 114 *they carfe and rofe in sonder*, thus transferred to the pl. | Caxton R 17, 35 *droof* | 18 *shoef* | 20 *gaf*, 21 *they gafe* | 83 *strof* (from *strive*). These forms in voiceless consonant were gradually discarded through analogical formations, the voiced sound prevailing even in cases like *rose* (Mal. 112 *aroos*), *gave*, etc. In this

<sup>1</sup> Similarly in the perfect-present. OE *ah*, pl. *agon*, AR 100 *treoue ase spuse ouh* so *beonne*, 108, etc.—Cf. also above p. 353, on *Ayenbite*. Curiously enough, final *f* is found sometimes, not only in northern texts, in the infinitive and present, thus London E 43 *ðif*, 79 *ðef*, 111 *gif*. 220 *y forgyf*, 196 *hafe* pres. pl., 106 *ough* inf. 'owe'.

way voice alternation became a constant means of distinguishing nouns with the voiceless from verbs with the voiced sounds.

f : v (in some cases with vowel change as well):

*life : live* | *half : halve*, etc. Fr. words: *safe : save* | *strife : strive* | *grief : grieve*.

Special remarks: the vb. *stave* may be considered a new formation after the new sg. *stave*. *Deave* from *deaf* (OE (a)*deafian*) lives on in Sc, see Burns, Scott OM 83 *dinna deave the gentlewoman wi' your testimony!* An analogical formation is the vb. *deaf* (from 1460 to Byron), expanded *deafen*. The sb to *delve* is *delf*, but that is "now only local", NED. There is a vb *wolve* 'behave like a wolf', but also a younger vb *wolf* in the same sense and 'eat like a wolf'.

Some vbs are formed analogically in -f: *elf*, *scarf*, *sheaf* (all in Sh.), *knife*, *staff*; *dwarf* from the 17th c.

The distinction f:v has entered so far into the general consciousness, that new sbs are formed, where there were formerly sbs in v: *belief*; the sb in -ve lived on till the 16th c., e.g. AR 2 *bileau*, Wycliff Rom 11.20 *vnbileue*, Caxton R 119 *bylene*. Alongside of the sb *make-believe* containing the inf. we have a rarer *make-belief*, e.g. Lytton K 423, Barrie TG 179, Maxwell G 61 (but in other places -ve as sb), Sherriff F 170, Benn Prec. Porcel. 199, 261; cf. Dickens Ch 81 (she) *made belief to clap her hands*.

Corresponding to the Fr sb *preuve* ME had forms in -ve. AR 164 *preoue*, Ch *proeve*, *preve*, Fulgens 80 *proues*; but Ch and Mandev. (161, 178) had also *preef*, and now we have *proof*. In the same way ME *reprove*. Mandev. 171 *repreef*, now *reproof* (but in a different sense Ch *repreve* and still *reprieve* sb) and ME *releue* (Latimer in Specimens 2.166), now *relief* (Ch B 1080 *in relief of*, with stress on *re*).

p:ð: *breath : breathe*, *cloth : clothe*, *mouth : mouth*, *loth : loathe*, *teeth : teeth*, *wreath* (Cf. MEG I. 6.92): *wreathe*; with change of meaning *sooth : soothe*. In *sheath* (OE *sceaþ*, *scæþ*) the ME forms for the sb in -e should make us expect [ð] in the sb, but it has [p]; the vb is *sheathe* with [ð]. There is a new vb *tooth* with [p].

OE sb *bæþ*, vb *baðian* give regularly *bath*, *bathe*; but there is also a new vb *bath* (bath the baby) and a new sb *bathe* (e.g. Tenny-

son Life 2.117 I walked into the sea and had a very decent bathe); this is not used in America, where *swim* is the usual expression.

s:z. The ordinary alternation is found, for instance, in *house, louse, mouse*; *use* (note that the same alternation was found in OFr: *us* : *user*<sup>1</sup>), *advice* : *advise*, *diffuse*, *device*, *devise*.

*Grease* sb [gri:s], vb [gri:z] in spite of Fr vb *graisser*. Curiously enough the sb is spelt *greaze* in Sh Mcb IV.1.65.

*Rise*, vb. with [z], OE *risan*, ordinarily *arisan*. The sb. dates from 1400; old dictionaries, Sheridan, Walker, Stephen Jones, Fulton, Jameson, Smart give the pronunciation [s], Elphinston 1765 says that *rise* 'the rising' sounds like *rice*. Sapir, *Language* (1921) 78 says that many Americans extend the principle found in *house* sb. and vb. to the noun *rise* (e.g. *the rise of democracy*). He thus thinks this pronunciation recent. This old [s] must have arisen in the same way as *f* in *belief*; later dictionaries give only [z] in the sb; thus also Ellis, *Plea for Phon. Spelling* 1848, who says that the distinction "is not usual, both words being pronounced [raiz]."<sup>2</sup>

*Excuse* sb [s], vb [z]. As Fr has the sb *excuse* with [z], the E sb (with [s] as early as Cooper 1685, perhaps earlier) must have developed analogically in the same way as *belief*.

*Close* sb. and adj. [s], vb. [z], ME *closen*, no Fr corresponding vb. New sb [z] in the sense 'completion', e.g. "draw to a close", spelt *cloze* in Sh H4A I. 1.13 "cloze of ciuill butchery". But there seems to be some confusion, and some speakers pronounce the sb. with [s], others with [z] in all significations.

*Refuse* sb ['refju:s], vb [ri'fju:z], thus with different stress; as the meanings are also widely apart, the two words are hardly felt as belonging together in the same way as the other pairs.

*Glass* sb, *glaze* vb. New: *glass* vb in various significations 'glaze; mirror, reflect'; *glaze* sb 'act of glazing, superposed coating'. *Grass* sb, *graze* vb. New: *grass* vb 'place on grass, knock down; plant grass

<sup>1</sup> Note the voiceless sound in the vb *used to*, see MEG IV. 1.9.

<sup>2</sup> This is one of the innumerable instances in which one regrets that NED, which is careful to record all, even the most insignificant, medieval and modern variations in spelling, pays no attention to earlier variations in pronunciation, in spite of the fact that Dr. Murray was one of the earliest disciples of Bell and expressly says that "The pronunciation is the actual living form or forms of a word, that is, the word itself, of which the current spelling is only a symbolization." (NED I p. \*XXIV.)

on'; *graze* sb 'pasturage; act of touching lightly, of shot'.—*Brass* sb, *braze* vb 'ornament with brass; make hard', e.g. Sh. Hml. III.4.37 if damn'd custome haue not braz'd it (heart) so, That it is prooffe and bulwarke against sense. New: *brass* vb 'coat with brass; cover with effrontery:' *to brass it* 'behave with effrontery'.

*Noose*; Ellis gives [s] in the sb and [z] in the vb, but this is not universally recognized, some have [s] in both words, thus NED, others [z] in both.

*Gloss* sb 'explanatory word', *gloze* vb, formerly 'interpret', now generally 'extenuate, put favourable interpretation on' (Butler Erewh. Rev. 128 "by putting his own glosses on all that he could gloze into an appearance of being in his favour"). This pair, however, does not properly belong here, as there is an old sb *glose*, from OF *glose*, med. Lat. *glosa*.

*Price* sb, OF *pris*, Lat. *pretium*, now Fr *prix*, *prize* vb, ME *prisen*, now chiefly in the sense 'value highly'. New: *price* vb 'note the price of' (Dickens Domb. 308 she had priced the silk), and *prize* sb 'reward': in this sense Ch had *pris*, with [s], as shown by the rhymes A 67, 237.—Note that etymologically *praise* belongs to these words, though now it is completely differentiated from them, OF *preisier* from Lat. *pretiare*. To this a sb, also with [z].

*Practice* sb, *practise* vb with [z], see above, p. 363; now both with [s].

*Promise*: Smart gave [s] in the sb, [z] in the vb, Walker [z] in both; now [s] in both.

*Sacrifice* similarly, Smart [s] sb, [z] vb, other old dictionaries [z] in both, now [s] in both.

An old difference in sound is perhaps indicated in the spellings *licence* sb, *license* vb, but now they have both of them [s]. (*Prophecy* sb, *prophesy* vb are distinguished by [-si, -sai]).

Besides the pairs already mentioned there are several other cases in which sb and vb have the same final sound, e.g.:

v: *love*, *move*, *drive*.

f (only when this sound is not original): *dwarf*, *laugh*, *rough*.

z: *ease*, *cause*, *gaze*, *surprise*, *repose*.

s: *pass*, *dress*, *press*, *base*, *face*, *place*, *voice*.

Final Note. In this paper I have purposely left out of account the back (and front) fricative written in OE *h*, pronounced finally [x] or [ç] (German ach- und ich-laut respectively) and medially with the corresponding voiced sounds and there generally written *g*. The treatment of these sounds is of course much the same as that of *f*, etc. We have in OE the alternation *uoh* : *woges* (also with vocalization *wos*), *beah* : *beages*, etc., ME *dwergh* : *dverges*, *dwerwes*, *dveryes*, etc. Cf. Orrm 1671 *fra wah to waȝbe*. In ME we must at some time have had the inflexion *hih* [hi·ç]: *hiȝe* [hi·(j)ə]. Final [x] later in many cases became [f]: *dwarf*, *rough*, etc. See on these sounds and their fates MEG I 2.92, 2.93, 10.1, 10.2, on the distinction between *enough* sg and *enow* pl MEG II 2.75.

— *Linguistica*, 1933.

## MONOSYLLABISM IN ENGLISH<sup>1</sup>

SINCE the very first beginning of the truly scientific study of languages as such, i.e. since the beginning of the nineteenth century, it has been customary to speak of one great class of languages as monosyllabic or isolating in contradistinction to agglutinative and flexional languages, and to take Chinese as a typical example of these monosyllabic languages; further it has been very often remarked that English in the course of its development in historical times has in many respects come to approach that type. The gradual change through which English had acquired more and more of the structural traits found in Chinese was formerly looked upon as decay from a more developed to a more primitive type, as Chinese was considered a specimen of the most primitive or, as it were, childish stage in linguistic evolution; nowadays one is much more inclined to see in this development a progressive tendency towards a more perfect structure;<sup>2</sup> besides, the dogma of the primitivity of Chinese has been recognized as completely wrong and due in a great measure to the peculiar system of Chinese writing with ideographical symbols which conceals from us the numerous changes that have made Chinese what it is, from a language that had quite a different phonetic and morphological structure.

It will be my task in the present paper to examine a little more in detail than has been done up to now the points of similarity and dissimilarity found between English and Chinese monosyllabism, and after a brief discussion of the causes that have led to monosyllabism

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<sup>1</sup> Biennial Lecture on English Philology, read before the British Academy, Nov. 6, 1928.

<sup>2</sup> *Studier over engelske Kasus* 1891; *Progress in Language* 1894; *Language, its Nature, Development and Origin* 1922.

to try to find out the extent to which monosyllabism has been carried in English, and finally to examine the consequences of this tendency and its importance for the whole structure of the language.

It is hardly necessary to dwell very long on the obvious fact that strong as is the tendency towards monosyllabism in English, the language nevertheless is to a very great extent made up of words of two or three or even more syllables. Such words are partly native, partly of foreign origin. The first are words which from the point of view of Modern English are etymologically irreducible, e.g. *daughter*, *little*, *seldom*, *batter*, *follow*, or the numerous words formed from shorter words by means of derivative or flexional endings or prefixes, e.g. *handle*, *fasten*, *woolen*, *sleepy*, *batter*, *botter*, *banded*, *horses*, *below*, *along*, or finally compounds like *handful*, *postman*, &c. Secondly, we have those innumerable polysyllables which have come in at various times from a great many other languages, especially the classical languages, words like *music*, *literature*, *philosophy*, and most of the technical words belonging to these and similar spheres, but also from other languages words like *chocolate*, *tomahawk*, *caravan*, &c. As all these words are used very frequently not only in the speech and writings of learned or scholarly people, but in the most everyday style, they are so essential to the language that it is impossible to characterize English as exclusively or even mainly a monosyllabic language. And yet it is much more monosyllabic than any of the cognate languages.

It is easy enough in English to build up whole sentences consisting exclusively or chiefly of monosyllables, e.g. 'Last week John gave his young wife a smart, small, cheap, straw hat'; we have many monosyllabic proverbs and similar sayings, like 'First come, first served', 'Haste makes waste, and waste makes want', 'Live and learn'; cp. also the Biblical 'In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread' and 'Thou shalt not steal'. From poets we may quote 'Love no man: trust no man: speak ill of no man to his face; nor well of any man behind his face' (B. Jonson), 'And ten dull words oft creep in one dull line' (Pope), 'Then none were for the party; Then all were for the state; Then the great man help'd the poor, and the poor man loved the great' (Macaulay), 'The long day wanes: the slow moon climbs: the deep Moans round with many voices' (Tennyson), and

so on down to the hymn of the I.W.W. (International Workers of the World): 'Work and pray, Live on hay; You'll get pie When you die.'

Monosyllables constitute the most indispensable part of the English vocabulary and are with few exceptions those words which the small child learns first. It has proved possible to bring out children's books containing not a single word with more than one syllable, and in Professor Edward L. Thorndike's careful calculation of the words which are found to occur most widely in English, the list containing the 500 most frequently used words comprises 400 monosyllables, and only 100 words of two or three syllables.<sup>1</sup>

What are the causes that have led to this predominant monosyllabism in English? In the first place we must here mention the tendency found in all languages, but stronger in English than in most other languages, to pronounce non-stressed vowels indistinctly and finally to leave them out altogether, if superfluous for the understanding. Through this, especially through the mutescence in the fourteenth century of a very great number of weak *e*'s (corresponding to fuller vowels in earlier periods), many words have been reduced to monosyllables. The extent may be judged from the simple fact that on one page of narrative Old English prose (the first page of Wulfstan's report to King Alfred) no less than sixty-nine words have been reduced from two or three syllables to one, while only sixteen have been preserved as polysyllables, and of these six have been reduced from three or four syllables to two.<sup>2</sup>

A great many of the words that came into the language later (from Scandinavian, French, &c.) were monosyllables from the outset, and others were later reduced from two to one syllable through the disappearance of the weak *e*. Thus in the first forty-two

<sup>1</sup> *The Teacher's Word Book*, Columbia University, New York, 1921.

<sup>2</sup> *King Alfred's Orosius*, ed. by Sweet, p. 17: *cæde* 3 said, *blaforde* lord, *cyninge* king, *ealra* all, *lande* 5 land, *Euton* 4 but, *feawum* few, *þære* 3 the, *sumum* some, *uolde* would, *longe* long, *lege* lay, *oþþe* 5 or, *norðan* 2 north, *caine* 2 all, *dagas* days, *meahte* 3 might, *dagum* 3 days, *(ge)uglan* 4 sail, *uglde* 2 sailed, *feower* four, *sceolde* should, *bidan* bide, *dorston* 2 durst, *hwalfe* half, *mette* met, *siþþan* since, *agram* 2 own, *wæron* 2 were, *hefdon* had, *cuman* come, *þara* the, *spella* spells, *sædon* said, *landum* lands, *utan* out, *geseah* saw, *þuhte* thought, *spæcon* spoke, *landes* land's, *habbað* have, *norþmest* northmost, *umtra* winter, *hwæðer* 3 whether, *ænig* any, *oþrum* other, *oþre* other, *ægher* either, *ðider* thither, *norþweardum* northward, *sumera* summer, *fiscerum* fishers, *fugelerum* fowlers, *fisceras* fishers, *fugelas* fowlers.



lines of *The Canterbury Tales* we find fifty disyllables which have now become monosyllables,<sup>1</sup> while a similar number of polysyllables have not been thus reduced.

Another phenomenon is also productive of monosyllables, namely what Dr. Murray termed 'aphesis', the loss of an initial syllable. Examples are very frequent with initial *a-* or *e-*: *down* from *adown*, *live* from *alive*, *pert* from *apert*, *spy* from *espy*, *squire* from *esquire*; but sometimes other initial syllables are thrown off, e.g. *fence* from *defence*, *sport* from *disport*, *vie* from *envie*.

Many monosyllables have arisen, not through any regular phonetic change, but through violent clippings of longer words. Such 'stump-words' are frequent in pet-names, e.g. the old *Meg* from *Margaret*, and more recent ones like *Di* for *Diana*, *Vic* for *Victoria*, *Mac* for *Macdonald*, &c. Outside proper names we find the same procedure, as in *mob* for *mobile*, *fad* for *fadaise*, *brig* for *brigantine*, which are no longer felt as abbreviations; further such more recent stump-words as *pub* for *public-house*, *sov* for *sovereign*, *gov* for *governor*, *zep* for *zeppelin*, and the numerous shortenings in schoolboys', journalists', and printers' slang which probably came into existence through written abbreviations: *math* for *mathematics*, *gym* for *gymnastics* or *gymnasium*, *prep* for *preparation*, *ad* for *advertisement*, *par* for *paragraph*, &c.<sup>2</sup>

In this connexion it is necessary also to mention abbreviations consisting in reading the alphabetical names of the initials of words, A.M. for *ante meridiem*, M.A. for *magister artium*, M.P., &c. This method, which is found in other languages, though not to the same extent as in English, has in recent times been everywhere much more frequently employed than formerly, chiefly, though not exclusively, during the war, which made combinations like O.T.C. for 'Officers'

<sup>1</sup> *sote, swete, droghte, Marche, peried, rote, lathed, croppes, yonge, sonne* 2, *halfe, yronne, smale, foules, maken, slepen, ye, priketh, longen, seken, straunge, strondes, londes, shires, ende, wende, seke, holpen, seke, uenden, yfalle, alle, wolden, ryde, weren* 3, *wyde, esed, beste, reste, male, ryse, space, tale, pace, thinketh, telle, semed, inne*. The numbers in this as well as in the preceding note indicate the number of times the identical form occurs.

<sup>2</sup> The term 'stumpword' was first used in Danish in my book *Nutidsprog* (1916; second ed. 1923 under the title *Domsprog*), and I ventured to translate it into English in *Language* (G. Allen & Unwin, 1922, p. 169 ff.). The term has found its way even into Esperanto (*stump-vortoj*, W. E. Collinson, *La Homa Lingvo*, 1927).

Training Corps', G.H.Q. for 'General Head-Quarters', and many others known in wide circles.

There can be no doubt that the tendency thus variously shown to abbreviate long words has become much stronger in English than in other languages, because the natural phonetic development of English had accustomed English speakers to regard monosyllables as the normal speech material. This is seen even more characteristically perhaps in the not inconsiderable number of monosyllables without any ascertained etymology which have come into existence during the last few centuries—words which have emerged, no one knows how, from the depths of linguistic subconsciousness and have become popular because they have been felt to be in agreement with the general structure of the English vocabulary, very often also because there has seemed to be a natural connexion between their sounds and their meanings.

This last remark of course is particularly true of echo-words or onomatopoeias, e.g. *swish*, *switch*, *suir*, *squirm*, *squeal*, *squark*, *squawk*, &c., but the same may be said, though to a lesser extent, of many other recent or comparatively recent words. I am thinking of such words as *bug*, *pun*, *jab* (refuse to go on), *fuss*, *blui*, *hoax*, *gloat*, *toss*, *dude*, *dud*, *stunt*, &c.

English monosyllabism thus is seen to have sprung not from one, but from several sources.<sup>1</sup>

How many monosyllables are there in the English language? Before trying to answer that question it will be well to state the number of *possible* monosyllables in English—a number which can be calculated with comparative ease from the number of vowels and diphthongs in connexion with the number of consonants and consonant combinations allowed either before or after the vowel of the syllable.

It is well known that languages in these latter respects differ very considerably. Some languages require every word to end in a vowel, others admit final consonants, though only one in each word, and then there are generally some consonants they avoid in that position. Thus Italian admits only *n*, *r*, *l* at the end of a word, Old Greek only

<sup>1</sup> It may also be mentioned as characteristic of the English tendency towards monosyllabism that the long Narragansett Indian name of a kind of gourd *squutasquash* has been adopted in the short form *squash*.

*n, r, s* (with *ks, ps*), to which must be added *k* in two words: *ek, ouk* (but then these forms occur only in the interior of a sentence under definite phonetic conditions) On the other hand the latter language admits some initial groups which are not often found, some of them, however, only in a few words, where evidently a vowel has dropped out at a comparatively late period: *tlēnai, tlētos, dmōs, thnēskō*. Each language thus has its idiosyncrasies in that respect. But English certainly goes very far both with regard to initial and final combinations, and few languages present such monosyllables as *strength, helps, stretched, scratched, pledged*.

There is an interesting passage in Herbert Spencer's *Autobiography* (i. 528) in which he calculates the number of 'good (i.e., presumably, easily distinguished) monosyllables that can be formed by the exhaustive use of good consonants and good vowel sounds' for the use of a contemplated 'universal language' on a purely *a priori* basis, thus on the same lines as Bishop John Wilkins's *Real Character and Philosophical Language* (1668) and totally different from those schemes of auxiliary languages on the basis of existing languages which a great many people nowadays think desirable and even possible for international communication. It is not easy to see what Spencer means by his 8 simple and 18 compound vowels and what simple and compound consonants he would admit in his scheme: he arrives at the number 108,261 good, possible monosyllables, but in later years suspected that the number of monosyllables would be considerably greater.

This to some extent agrees with my own calculation, which is based on the fact that English as now spoken admits 21 simple initial consonants [b, p, d, t, g, k, m, n, w, v, f, θ, ð, ʒ, z, s, ʒ, ʃ, l, r, j, h],

15 initial consonant-groups [bl, br, bj, pl, pr, pj, dw, dʒ, dr, dj, tw, tʃ, tr, tj, gl, gr, gj, kw, kl, kr, kj, mj, nj, vj, fl, fr, fj, ʃr, ʃj, sp, spl, spr, spj, st, str, stj, sk, skw, skl, skr, skj, ʃr, lj, hw, hj],

18 simple final consonants [b, p, d, t, g, k, m, n, ŋ, v, f, θ, ʒ, z, s, ʒ, ʃ, l],

100 final consonant-groups [bd, bz, pt, pʰ, pʰs, ps, dz, dʒ, dʒd, dʰ, dʰs, dst, ts, tʃ, tʃt, gd, gz, ks, kst, kʰ, kʰs, kt, kts, mz, md, mp, mps, mpts, mʰ, nz, nd, ndz, nt, nts, ntʃ, ntʃt, ns, nst, nʰ,

nɸs, ndʒ, ndʒd, ɲz, ɲd, ɲk, ɲks, ɲkt, ɲɸ, ɲɸs, vʒ, vd, fs, ft, fɸ, fɸs, ʒz, ʒd, ɸs, ɸt, zd, st, sts, sk, sks, skt, sp, sps, spt, ft, ld, ldz, lm, lmz, lmd, lf, lfs, lft, lfɸ, ls, lst, lt, lts, lɸ, lɸs, lk, lks, lkt, lkts, lp, lps, lpt, ltʃ, lv, lvz, lvd, lb, lbz, ldʒ, ldʒd].

21 vowels and diphthongs [i, iː, e, ei, æ, ə, ʌ, aː, u, uː, ou, ɔ, ɔː, iə, eə, uə, aə, ɔə, ai, au, oi].

Now we cannot simply multiply these numbers with one another, because it must be taken into consideration on the one hand that we may have syllables beginning or ending with a vowel without any consonant, and on the other hand, that the short vowels, like [i] in *bit*, [e] in *let*, [æ] in *bat*, [ʌ] in *but*, [u] in *foot*, [ɔ] in *hot*, cannot occur finally without a consonant. The result of my calculation is that the phonetic structure of the English language as actually spoken in our own times would admit the possibility of rather more than 158,000 monosyllables.<sup>1</sup>

In the list of initial combinations we miss certain groups which were found in Old English, but have disappeared or rather have been simplified: *kn*, *gn*, *ur*, which have been preserved in writing: *know*, *gnaw*, *write*; *fn*, which was found chiefly in echo-words like *fneosan*, now supplanted by the equally expressive *sneeze*, while Scandinavian has kept *fnyse*, *fnysa*; *hl*, *hn*, *hr*, at one time probably simply voiceless *l*, *n*, *r*, and now supplanted by the corresponding voiced sounds, just as *hu*, now written *wh*, has become voiced *w* in the south of England and some parts of America.

In final combinations phonetic evolution has similarly lightened a certain number of groups found in the earlier stages of the language, thus particularly those of which the spelling *-ght* still preserves the memory, e.g. in *night*, *sought*; we may also mention the disappearance of *l* in many words like *half*, *palm*,<sup>2</sup> and the vocalization and partial or complete disappearance of *r* in cases like *bird*, *heart*, &c.

<sup>1</sup> Such a calculation must necessarily be arbitrary in some respects. *Wh* in *which* [hw] has been counted as distinct from [w] in *with*, but combinations like [aɪə] in *hire*, cp. *higher*, [aʊə] in *our*, cp. *power* (*flour*, *flower*), are not counted as monosyllabic. The pronunciation or non pronunciation of the middle consonant in such groups as [mps, ntʃ, ndʒ], e. g. in *glimpse*, *inch*, *lounge*, does not affect my calculation.

Initial and final [ʒ] has been admitted on the strength of the words *jeu*, *tige*, *rouge*, but in the normal English sound system this sound occurs only in the combination [dʒ] and medially between vowels as in *meazure*.

<sup>2</sup> But *lf*, *lm* have been kept after some vowels: *elf*, *film*.

On the other hand we find in the list of sounds which are tolerated finally or initially in Modern English some which were not used in exactly the same way in Old English. These are sounds which have in recent times risen to the dignity of 'phonemes', the term in modern phonetic theory for sounds that can be used for distinctive purposes, i.e. to keep words apart which would otherwise be identical. The first of these modern phonemes is [ŋ] in *sing*, *long*, &c. Some languages, e.g. Russian, do not recognize this sound at all. Others, e.g. Italian, have the sound, but not as distinctive: it occurs as a variant of [n] and is pronounced whenever [n] should come before [k] or [g]: *banco. lungo*, thus also in consecutive words: *fin che, un gusto*, &c. But the sound is never found by itself. This must have been the state of things in Old English, though probably without the rule about adjoining words; *hing* was thus pronounced [biŋg], as it is still in some dialects (Lancashire, Cheshire, &c.).<sup>1</sup> But in standard English final [g] was dropped after [ŋ], which thus became an independent phoneme, used, for instance, to distinguish *sing* [siŋ] from *sin*, *rang* from *ran*, *tongue* from *tun*, &c.

The three voiced spirants [v, ð, z] are also new phonemes in English, but did not exist as such in Old English. These sounds began to appear at an unascertainable period of Old English as voiced variants of the voiceless sounds [f, þ, s], but only medially under the influence of voiced surroundings, chiefly vowels. At the beginning and end of words these voiced spirants never occurred in Old English. If they are now found pretty frequently in these positions, this is due chiefly to two sound changes. First the dropping of weak *e*, which we have already seen as an important factor in modifying the whole phonetic aspect of our language: thus [z] became final in *choose*, *rise*, and a great many other words, [v] in *give*, *have*, *love*, &c., [ð] in *bathe*, *clothe*, *tithe*, and other words. Secondly, we have the voicing of these consonants after a weak vowel, which took place in English in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and forms a striking parallel to the famous 'Verner's Law' in prehistoric times.<sup>2</sup> This led to the occurrence of the sounds [v, ð, z] in final position in words like *with* (where the old pronunciation with voiceless [þ] is not yet

<sup>1</sup> J. Wright, *Dialect Grammar*, § 274.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 357 ff

extinct), *of* (cp. the strongly stressed form *off*), *as*, *is*, *has*, at first only when the words were in weak positions in the sentence, though the voiced sounds have now been extended to strong positions as well. In connexion with this sound-change must also be mentioned the voicing of initial *th* in the pronominal words *that*, *the*, *this*, *thus*, &c. In this way these voiced spirants became independent phonemes in native English words; moreover, [v] and [z] are found initially and finally in loan-words.<sup>1</sup> This short historical account makes us understand how it is that these three sounds are found in a considerably lesser number of monosyllables than we should expect *a priori*.

Final [z] is extremely frequent in inflexional forms like *hands*, *kings*, where it was voiced in ME. *handes*, *kinges*, thus in a weak position, before *e* was dropped. The voiced final in *does*, *goes* must be due to analogy.

If English now has a great many final consonant groups which were not found in the earlier stages of the language, the chief cause is the loss of weak *e*, which I have already had occasion to mention as one of the most important factors in the history of English. We therefore see consonant groups in the plurals of substantives (*wolves*, *elms*, *hands*, *aunts*), in the corresponding third person singulars of verbs (*solves*, *helps*, *tempts*), and in the preterits of weak verbs (*solved*, *helped*, *lodged*, *pinched*). But it is worthy of note that a certain regard for clearness has counteracted the otherwise universal tendency to drop this *e*, for *e* is kept with the sound [i] where it stood between two identical or closely similar sounds in these endings, e.g. in *noses*, *pieces*, *pisses*, *churches*, *edges*, *ended*, *hated*. Such words were not allowed to become monosyllables, because stem and flexion would then have been fused together.

We must mention here the two endings *-est*, in the second person of verbs and in the superlative. The ordinary principles of phonetic development would make us expect here the same rule as with the ending *-es*, thus loss of *e* except after a hissing sound: *thou lead'st*, but *thou lovest*, *the hot'st*, but *the wisest*, &c. As a matter of fact we find corresponding forms pretty often in poets of the sixteenth and

<sup>1</sup> Among these must be reckoned *vast* and *vane* from those southern dialects which voice all initial [f, þ, s].

seventeenth centuries (partly also earlier), even if the result is a somewhat harsh conglomeration of consonants. Marlowe and Shakespeare thus in the second person have forms like *gotst, tookst, thinkst, struck'st, foughtst, dipd'st, suck'st* (*Tit. And.*, II. iii. 144, where modern editions print *suck'dst*, because it is a preterit); Milton similarly has *thou wentst, tellst, toldst, thinkst, eatst, drinkst, &c.*, even *feigndst* (*Sam. Agon.*, 1135), *stripp'dst* (ib. 1188). Modern poets generally make *-est* a full syllable, apart from a few forms in auxiliaries (*didst, badst, wouldst, couldst*), but as the pronoun *thou* and the corresponding verbal forms have long ceased to be used in ordinary speech, no inferences can be drawn from disuse of the forms with mute *e*.

It is otherwise with superlatives which have always belonged to the natural speech of everyday life. Here Elizabethans by the side of full forms have contracted ones like *kind'st, stern'st, sweet'st, strict'st, strong'st, young'st*; but Milton seems to have only disyllabic forms: *sweetest, loudest, greatest, &c.*, and these are the only ones that have survived. The reason for this deviation from the ordinary phonetic development can hardly be anything else than the feeling that the longer forms are more euphonious and clearer, i.e. easier to understand, combined with analogy from the comparative *sweeter, stronger, &c.*, which it was naturally impossible to reduce to one syllable.

English is thus very rich indeed in the capacity of forming monosyllabic words; but it is obvious that only a comparatively small part of the 150,000 theoretical possibilities calculated above occur as actual words in the language: Herbert Spencer in his constructed philosophical language would be able to utilize all easy or possible syllable constructions to a much greater extent than English or any other existing language has actually done.

Very often it is quite impossible to indicate any reason why such and such a combination occurs and another one does not. Here as so often we can only say that language is just as capricious as its maker, man. While we find initial *b* and final *d* with nearly every possible vowel and diphthong between them as actually existing words: *bid, beal, bed, bade* (*bayed*), *bad, bird, bud, bard, booded, bode, bawd, beard, bared, bored, bide, bowed*—and while we have nearly as many words beginning with *b* and ending in *t* (*bit, beat,*

&c.), there are only two words beginning with *g* and ending in simple *p*: *gape*, *gap*; and *sheath* is the only word beginning with [ʃ] and ending with [p]; there are no other words than *switch* and *stretch* beginning and ending with exactly these sound-groups.

Some final combinations are extremely rare, thus *-lst* is found only in *pulsed*, inflected form of the verb *pulse*, and *whilst*. Voiceless [p] after a consonant is found in two classes of words only, neither of them very numerous, ordinals (*fifth*, *sixth*, *eighth*, *ninth*, *tenth*, *twelfth*) and 'abstract' derivatives: *length*, *strength*, *width*, *warmth*, *depth*, *health*, *stealth*, *wealth*, *filth*, *spilth*, and then in the isolated word *month*.<sup>1</sup>

In some cases linguistic history shows us the reason for the occurrence or non-occurrence, or for the frequency or rarity of some combination. Thus the infrequency of words with a short [u] is due to the fact that in most cases that vowel has become [ʌ] as in *cut*, [u] being left intact only in certain combinations, chiefly under the influence of a preceding lip consonant, thus regularly before [l]: *bull*, *pull*, *full*, *wolf*, and similarly in *bush*, *push*, *put*; in other cases the preservation of [u] is connected with the existence of an earlier form with a long vowel, which is still shown by the spelling *oo*: *good*, *book*, *took*, &c.

After the transition of short [a] before [l] to [ɔ] as in *call*, *ball*, we should expect to find not a single word ending in [æɪ]: as a matter of fact we have two: *pal*, which is a recent loan from Gipsy *pal* (originally a Hindu form of the word which in English has become *brother*) and *shall*, which must be due to the frequent use of the word under weak stress, where the transition to [ɔ] did not take place.

In proper names we have [æɪ] in the pet-forms *Sal*, *Hal*, and *Mal* from *Sarah*, *Harry* (*Henry*), and *Mary*. These, with *Doll* from *Dorothy* and *Moll*, *Poll* by the side of *Mal*, must be explained from the fact that at the time when these pet-names were first formed [r] had already become the present flap instead of a prolongable trill; this flap always presupposes a following vowel and therefore could not end a monosyllable: in shortening these names people (children)

<sup>1</sup> For the sake of completeness we may mention Walpole's formations *greenth* and *gloomth*, and Ruskin's *illth*.



accordingly took the nearest prolongable consonant, [l]. Contrast with this the recent shortening of *paragraph* in journalese to *par* [pa'ə], a shortening which certainly took place in writing before it was pronounced.

Many consonant groups are found only in flexional forms: thus bz (*herbs*), bd (*sobbed*), dz (*bids*; solitary case: *adze*), dʒd (*raged*), ts (*bats*; but: *quantz*), tʃt (*fetchd*), gz (*bags*), gd (*flogged*), kts (*sects*), mz (*lambs*; solitary: *Thames*; *alms* is felt as if containing plural -s), md (*combed*), m(p)t (*dreamt*; *stamped*; cf., however, *tempt*, *prompt*), m(p)ts (*tempts*), ndz (*friends*), n(t)ʃt (*flinched*), nst (*danced*), n(d)ʒd (*singed*), ŋz (*sings*), ŋd (*hanged*), ŋkt (*thanked*), vz (*caves*), vd (*lived*), fs (*cliffs*), fts (*tufts*), ðz (*bathes*), ðd (*clothed*), ps (*cloths*), zd (*eased*), ʃt (*wished*), sts (*fists*), sks (*asks*), skt (*waked*), sps (*wasps*), spt (*lisped*), lz (*falls*), ldz (*holds*), lms (*films*), lfs (*sylphs*), lts (*tilts*; besides: *waltz*), lks (*sulks*), lkt (*skulked*), lps (*helps*), lpt (*gulped*), l(t)ʃt (*belched*), lvz (*wolves*), lvd (*shelved*), lbz (*bulbs*), l(d)ʒd (*bulged*).

To find out how many monosyllables there are in English as actually existing words I have counted those enumerated in the first part of A. Loring's *The Rhymers' Lexicon*,<sup>1</sup> and have there found about 4,700 words, but these are not the only ones, for the author only in rare cases gives inflected forms: where he has only one form *name*, the forms *nam* and *named* should be counted as well, and as the same is true of a great many other words, though not of all, I do not think we are far wrong if instead of 4,700 words we give as the number of monosyllables in actual use in English some 8,000 forms.

If now we go to consider the language which has so often been mentioned as the counterpart of English and which is certainly the most typical monosyllabic language in the world, Chinese, we shall see that in respect of the things we have here considered the two languages are really as two opposite poles. Chinese admits no consonant group initially, apart from affricates, and every word must end either in a vowel or in one of the two nasals *n* and *ŋ*. The syllable structure is thus infinitely simple in comparison with the complexity of English.

<sup>1</sup> London (Routledge) n.d.

In the 'National Alphabet', constructed by an official committee in 1913,<sup>1</sup> we find

24 initial,

3 medial, and

12 final sounds (some of them containing a nasal).

Now, as a word may consist of three elements, or of one or two (but not of one of the 'initial' sounds by itself), it would seem that there is a theoretical possibility of 1,191 distinct syllables. Even if we multiply this number by four on account of the four word-tones used in the Mandarin language of Peking to keep otherwise identical words apart, and thus arrive at 4,764 distinct syllables, this number will be found insignificant if compared with the 150,000 possibilities of English. But not even this small number of syllables is completely utilized in the actual Chinese language, for there we find only 420 syllables<sup>2</sup>—if we multiply this number by four for the different tones, we arrive at the number 1,680, which is considerably less than the number we found in actual use in English.

The fact is that in English the phonetic development has chiefly gone in the direction of multiplying the possibilities of distinct syllable structure, thus especially by admitting many final composite groups through the loss of *e*; at the same time the most important flexional consonants have been preserved, namely *s* and *d* (*t*). Recent development in French has gone in the opposite direction in so far as a great many final consonants have been dropped, even if in former times they served as flexional endings; compare thus English *pot* and *pots* with French *pot* and *pots*, both of them pronounced [po]; the Middle French distinct verbal forms *je di*, *tu dis*, *il dit* have been levelled in the one pronounced form [di]. Note also that English has kept the original sounds of *ch* [tʃ] and *g* and *j* [dʒ], which in French have been reduced to [ʃ, ʒ] as in *chase*, *joy*, Fr. *chasse*, *joie*. Now the development in Chinese has been along the same lines as in French, final *p*, *t*, *k* have disappeared, and initial groups have been simplified even to a much greater extent than in

<sup>1</sup> Fu Liu, *Les Mouvements de la Langue Nationale en Chine* (Paris, 1925), p. 24.

<sup>2</sup> B. Karlgren, *Sound and Symbol in Chinese* (Oxford, 1923), p. 29. It is true that Cantonese admits about 720 and some other dialects a few more distinct syllables; but even then the number is very small.

French.<sup>1</sup> The result, in the words of Karlgren, is 'that a foreigner listening to the talk of a Pekinese gets the impression that he has a vocabulary of a few dozen words which he is continually repeating'.<sup>2</sup> No foreigner listening to English would have the same impression.

In his recent most important work on all the linguistic families of the world,<sup>3</sup> Father W. Schmidt devotes a long chapter to an investigation of the various initial and final combinations and arrives at the result that consonant groups in these two positions are characteristic on the one hand of arctic climate, on the other of mountainous tracts, while a simple structure of words which admits no groups and prefers vowels at the end of words belongs to a warm climate: I must leave it to my readers to decide for themselves whether this theory is applicable to the contrast I have just been mentioning. I should, however, add that Father Schmidt does not ascribe everything to these physical conditions, but also sees influences of the old 'spheres of civilization' ('Kulturkreise': 'vaterrechtlich-totemistisch' and 'mutterrechtlich Hackbaukultur', &c.), where it is not always easy to follow him. The chief weakness in his whole manner of viewing linguistic things is to my mind that he does not pay sufficient attention to the historically ascertainable diversity of development in the languages spoken by the chief civilized nations.

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The traits in linguistic structure which we have been considering have far-reaching consequences. Let us first consider the question of homonyms, or homophones, as they are better termed. Most English homophones are monosyllables, though it is true that there are some of two or even three syllables, e.g. *manner*, *manor*; *lessen*, *lesson*; *aloud*, *allowed*; *complement*, *compliment*. According to a rough

<sup>1</sup> The language of the sixth century still distinguished between *ka* "song", *kəp* "frog", *kat* "cut", and *kak* "each", but by the loss of the finals all these words first became *ka*, and then, through the change of *a* into *o*, *kə*, so that *kə* means "song" as well as "frog", "cut", and "each". Final *m* was changed into *n*, and thus the ancient *nam* "south" and *nam* "difficult" are both *nan*, &c. Karlgren, *Sound and Symbol*, p. 28.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 29.

<sup>3</sup> *Die Sprachfamilien und Sprachenkreise der Erde* (1926).

calculation there are about four times as many monosyllabic as polysyllabic homophones; nor is this to be wondered at, for the shorter the word, the more likely is it to find another word of accidentally the same sound. It would be strange if there were two words that had by chance hit upon the same combination of syllables as *tobacco* or *cigarette* or *advantage*, but this is much more likely to happen with short words; we may even say that monosyllables with compound initial or final consonant groups present fewer homonyms than those of the simplest possible syllabic structure; cp. *male mail*, *so sew sow*, *doe dough*, *row* (two words) *roe* (two words), *no know*, *buy by*, *I eye ay*, *you ewe yew*.

Now we understand how it is that Chinese, in which all syllables are built up in this very simple manner, abounds in homophones. The consequence of the phonetic simplifications alluded to above is that while the old literature with its very succinct style is still understandable to the eye, thanks to the ideographic writing which distinguishes all these words, it is quite impossible to understand it when read aloud with the pronunciation of to-day. There is in China a gap between the literary and the colloquial language which is incomparably more deep-going and far-reaching than in English, great as is the difference here between spelling and pronunciation. It is most interesting to see the way in which the natural spoken language of the Chinese has in course of time reacted against the overwhelming number of homophones introduced through phonetic changes;<sup>1</sup> changes which, of course, took centuries to mature and which would never have prevailed if there had not been in the spoken language of everyday life certain safeguards that secured intelligibility. In the first place collocation of two synonyms is often resorted to: if each of them has several meanings, but the two have only one meaning in common, this must be the one intended by coupling them. Next, instead of using verbs intransitively, the object logically inherent in it is added (eat food, read book, ride horse, &c., instead of the verb by itself). Third, a 'classifier' is often added, showing what class of objects one is thinking of, as when *shan*, which may mean both 'mountain' and 'shirt' is made clear by the addition of a word meaning 'locality' or 'article of dress' respectively. In this way colloquial

<sup>1</sup> Karlgren, p. 32 ff.

Chinese cannot really any longer be termed a truly monosyllabic language, for a great many ideas are constantly expressed by means of disyllabic compounds, and the younger generation of writers is vigorously fighting for the admission of this 'vulgar' style into all kinds of literature.

If now we turn to English we find that such safeguards are used much more sparingly than in Chinese. Compounds of two in themselves ambiguous homophones are scarcely found at all: I can think of no other example than *courtyard*. More often we find prepositional additions as in 'a box on the ear', 'the sole of her foot', 'an ear of corn', but these amplifiers are not always necessary. It is usual to add *hand* in many combinations like 'the left-hand corner', 'his right-hand trousers pocket', because *left* as well as *right* might be misunderstood, but in other combinations *hand* is not needed: 'to right and left', 'turn to the right', and, of course, 'his right eye'. I suppose that the ambiguity of the words *man* and *wight* (*white*) is the reason why one always says 'the Isle of Man' and 'the Isle of Wight', while this addition is not used in the case of Jersey and other islands. Note also the addition of an unambiguous synonym in 'let and hindrance', which became necessary when the two distinct verbs, Old English *lettan* 'hinder' and *lettan* 'allow, cause to' became identical in sound.

This leads us to another safeguard by which disturbing homophones may be avoided: one or even both of the ambiguous words may drop out of use: thus *let* 'hinder' has become obsolete. Some other words of which this may be said, are *quean*, *mead*, *meed*, *mete*, *lief*, *weal*, *wheal*, *ween*, *reck*, *wreak*. Many of these, however, probably were already more or less rare or obsolescent before that sound-change took place which identified them with other words.

If English then has made a much more sparing use of various safeguards against homophones than has been the case in Chinese, the reason to my mind must be sought in the circumstance that homophones are infinitely less numerous than in Chinese and generally much less dangerous.

It is evident that the danger of misunderstanding arising from homophony is much less if the words belong to different parts of speech than if they are both of them adjectives like *light* (not heavy, or, not dark) or substantives; in the latter case there is comparatively

little fear of ambiguity if one word refers to living beings and the other does not, e.g. *heir* (to the throne) and *air* (of the atmosphere). If one word is a noun and the other a verb, the possibility of misunderstanding is practically nil.

Take the pair *see* and *sea*. Bartlett's *Concordance to Shakespeare* shows us ninety-four instances of *see* (*sees*) in the three plays *The Tempest*, *Hamlet*, and *King Lear*; of these only one can be called ambiguous, and that only by stretching the meaning of that word, namely the answer to the question 'Where is Polonius?' 'In heaven, send thither to see.' In all the other instances the value of the word as a verb is indicated with perfect certainty either by a preceding subject ('I see') or by a following object ('I have no ambition To see a goodlier man'), or by an auxiliary verb ('you shall see anon') or by the presence at once of two or three of these clarifying means ('I see it.' 'I ne'er again shall see her.' 'Do you see yonder cloud?') The same three plays show thirty-six instances of *sea* (*seas*): in twenty-seven of these the article shows that it is a substantive, in one the same is shown by an adjective, and in three by a preposition (of, in, at). In the remaining five we have the combination *to sea*, which might, strictly speaking, be misunderstood as the infinitive of the verb; but this possibility is grammatically excluded in two instances ('I shall no more to sea, to sea'), and extremely improbable in the rest ('set her [the ship] two courses off to sea again.' 'They hurried us aboard a bark, Bore us some leagues to sea.' 'Then to sea, boys, and let her go hang!').

If, then, due regard is had to the context in which the form occurs—and even more important in some cases, to the whole situation in which it is spoken, which may be taken as one part of the context, or vice versa—the possibilities of misunderstanding are very small indeed, and in spite of their homophony the two words thus fulfil their purpose in life. We can assert this, and yet admit the truth of Dr. Bridges's remark that 'Anyone who seriously attempts to write well-sounding English will be aware how delicately sensitive our ear is to the repetition of sounds' and that therefore such a line as 'I see the sea's untrampled floor' would be impossible in poetry and must be changed into 'I see the deep's untrampled floor'. Dr. Bridges also thinks that unless the pronunciation of the verb *know* is

changed so that a vowel more like that of *law* is restored, the whole verb *to know* is doomed. 'The third person singular of its present tense is *nose*, and its past tense is *new*, and the whole inconvenience is too radical and perpetual to be received all over the world.' But surely, if these forms are examined in their natural surroundings in sentences such as are spoken every day all over the English-speaking world, it will be seen that the danger is very slight indeed. 'I know.' 'My no is just as good as your yes.' 'He knows.' 'His nose bleeds.' 'You knew it.' 'A new hat.' No one on hearing these combinations will have the slightest difficulty in understanding them, and they would be perfectly clear even in a consistent phonetic spelling. In nearly every case in which the word is heard, the mind of the hearer has already been prepared by what precedes, so that the word is immediately put into its proper pigeon-hole, and no hesitation is occasioned by the fact that there is somewhere else in the language another word consisting of the same sounds.

Punsters delight in stories like this one: 'We went to the seaside for a change and rest, but the waiter got all the change, and the landlord took all the rest.' In none of these sentences can the words be misunderstood, they are perfectly clear from the context, and it is only the unexpected bringing them together that makes us realize that *change* (which is etymologically only one word) and similarly *rest* (which etymologically is two words) are here used in different significations in different contexts.

Dr. Henry Bradley writes (*Collected Papers*, 175): 'The compiler of a concise vocabulary of a foreign language can use, without risk of being misunderstood, such brief renderings as "son", "sun", "knight", "night", "oar", "ore", "hair", "hare", "to dye", "to die", "to sow", "to sew", "to rain", and "to reign". If English were written phonetically, he would have to add explanations.' Quite so, but the ordinary man's needs are not the same as those of a lexicographer: *he* thinks in connected sentences, not in isolated words.

Bradley's remark forms part of his eloquent plea against phonetic spelling, in which he lays great—to my mind undue—stress on the advantages of differentiations in spelling of words which to the ear are identical.<sup>1</sup> He does not sufficiently consider those cases in which

<sup>1</sup> Among Bradley's arguments in favour of retaining the historic spelling is the

homophones are not distinguished in spelling and in which one might therefore think that mistakes would constantly and easily arise in reading English. As a matter of fact this does not happen so often that the danger is serious. If we take the word *sound* in the *Concordance to Shakespeare* we find scores of sentences like the following:

- (1) Where should this music be? i'the air or the earth? It sounds no more.
- (2) Sounds and sweet airs, that give delight and hurt not.
- (3) And deeper than did ever plummet sound I'll drown my book.
- (4) Sleep she as sound as careless infancy.
- (5) Try your patience if it be sound.

No one in hearing or seeing such sentences will have the slightest difficulty in understanding them at once and referring (1) and (2) to one meaning, (3) to another, and (4) and (5) to a third totally different word.<sup>2</sup>

I do not, of course, pretend that ambiguity is never to be feared, only I think that the danger in English is not overpowering. I may be allowed to mention a few cases I have come across in which writers have not considered the convenience of their readers. Swinburne writes (*Songs before Sunrise*, 102):

Sound was none of their feet,  
Light was none of their faces.

Here one is perhaps tempted at first to take the meaning to be that none of their feet was healthy and that their faces were dark, while on second thought one discovers that no sound was heard of their feet, and no light was to be seen on their faces. In another place the same poet writes (*Atalanta*, 42):

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following: 'A distinguished poet has used the expression "my knightly task"; the silent *k* makes his meaning clear, but when the poem is recited the hearer may be excused if he misunderstands.' But surely a poet should write in such a way that his poems can be understood even when recited; if English had been written phonetically he would not have dared to use the expression, but would at once have seen that it would be misunderstood when heard—so the argument cuts both ways.

<sup>2</sup> There is a fourth word *sound* 'a narrow passage of water', this occurs only once in Shakespeare, in *Lucrece*, 1329, where a pun on the first word *sound* is evidently intended according to Shakespeare's habit: 'Deep sounds make lesser noise than shallow fords.'



ere my son  
Felt the light touch him coming forth,

which I for one at first understood as containing the adjective *light* (not heavy) and the substantive *touch*, while it took some little time to discover that *light* is the substantive (opposite of darkness) and *touch* the verb: this would have been immediately clear if I had heard the verse recited: the spoken word is often much less ambiguous than the written form.

In a modern novel (Jack London, *The Valley of the Moon*) we read: 'I feel that I am possessed of something that makes me like the other girls:' is *like* a verb or an adjective? It is only when a little farther down we find 'And then, too, I know that I was not like them before' that the doubt is removed.

In one of his articles Huxley spoke of Genesis and was unfortunate enough to write 'Between these two lies the story of the Creation of man and woman, and their fall', &c., which made W. T. Stead attack him furiously for calling two Bible stories lies, while, if he had read the article dispassionately, he would have seen from the continuation, that *these two* = 'these two narratives', and that *lies* is the innocent verb in the third person singular. But the same mistake is possible in Kipling's poem 'The Islander', where he says:

On your own heads, in your own hands,  
The sin and the saving lies!

Similarly in Lowes Dickinson's *Appearances*, 232: 'For behind and beyond all its fatuities, confusions, crimes, lies, as the justification of it all, that deep determination to secure a society more just and more humane which inspires all men.'

On the other hand, it is true that one may read hundreds and hundreds of pages in English books without stumbling upon instances of ambiguity like those here collected.

The preceding considerations have brought us to a subject to which linguistic psychologists of the future are bound to devote a good deal of attention, but which has hitherto been generally neglected, namely: How is linguistic understanding brought about? What are the mental conditions or prerequisites for a complete comprehension of spoken or written words and sentences? What is understood,

or easily understood, and what not? I shall beg to offer a few remarks on this subject in connexion with my general theme, English monosyllables.

Each sound, each syllable, that is spoken, takes up a short, but appreciable and measurable amount of time. The hearer has the same time, plus the pauses, to digest what he hears. Now a long sequence of sounds, which forms one notional unit, gives the hearer plenty of time to think out what is meant: a long word therefore may be, and very often is, complete in itself, and may be considered autonomous as compared with small ones, which are dependent on their surroundings. When we hear such a word as *superstition* or *astronomy* or *materialistic*, we have had plenty of time before the last sound has been uttered to realize what the speaker wanted to say. We may even have understood it before the speaker was half through—and it is this which makes such stump-words as *choc* for *chocolate* or *lab* for *laboratory* possible: the original words are really longer than necessary.

It is otherwise with short words, or at any rate with many of them. We do not always understand them immediately on the strength of their own individuality, but only in connexion with other words. The comprehension becomes, if I may say so, kinematographic: we have no time to see the single picture in itself, but perceive it only in combination with what comes before and after and thus serves to form one connected moving picture. Here it is especially the already mentioned small grammatical words ('empty words')—articles, particles, prepositions, auxiliaries—which act as policemen and direct each of the other words to its proper place in the brain of the hearer so as to facilitate orderly understanding.

This kinematographic comprehension of short words makes it possible for us sometimes to use them in a way that may seem logically indefensible because it militates against their proper definite meaning; this meaning in certain combinations does not at all come to the hearer's consciousness. When we say 'now and then' we have had no time to realize the ordinary precise meaning of *now* — 'at the present moment' before the following words have shown us that the three words are to be taken together, and then they mean 'from time to time' or 'occasionally'. In the same way in Danish *nu og da* (cp.

German *dann und wann*), but in French we can have nothing corresponding, because the words for 'now', *maintenant* and *à présent*, are long enough to call up the one definite meaning at once. Cp. also *here and there*. French *ça et là*.

We now see the reason why polysemy<sup>1</sup> is found so often in small words to an extent which would not be tolerable in longer words. This is particularly frequent with short verbs, some of which on that account are the despair of lexicographers: in the *N.E.D.* *put* has 54 different significations given to it, *make* 96, and *set* even 154, several of them with numerous subdivisions. These verbs are frequently used in connexion with adverbs or prepositions in such a way that the meaning of the combination can in no wise be deduced from the meaning of each word separately, cf. for instance *put in*, *put off*, *put out*, *put up* (*put up with*), *make out*, *make for*, *make up*, *set down*, *set in*, *set out*, *set on*, *set up* (this with some forty subdivisions), *give in*, *give out*, *give up*, &c. The great number of these idiomatic combinations is one of the most characteristic traits of the English language: they differ from disyllabic words by having flexional endings added to the first element (*he puts up*) and by admitting in some cases the insertion of other words between the two parts (*he gives it up*, &c.).

It should be remarked that the psychological effect of these cases of polysemy, where 'one and the same word' has many meanings, is exactly the same as that of those cases where two or three words of different origin have accidentally become homophones.

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A special kind of polysemy is found in all those cases in which one and the same form belongs to various parts of speech, as when *drink* in one connexion is a substantive, in another a verb, when *loud* is both adjective and adverb, and *round* may be a substantive, an adjective, an adverb, a preposition, and a verb according to circumstances. This trait in the structure of Modern English is one of those

<sup>1</sup> I venture to use this word (in the sense 'many-meaning-ness') though it is not found in the *N.E.D.*: it is used very often by continental linguists (in French, German, Swedish).

in which it resembles Chinese most: the historical cause is the loss of those endings which in former periods of the language served to distinguish different parts of speech. If we reckon these cases among homophones—we might call them grammatical homophones—they swell the number of homophones so considerably that it will be quite impossible to calculate how many homophones there are in English. (Dr. Bridges, who does not include them, has counted 'over 800 ambiguous sounds' in English, which means that 'we must have something between 1,600 and 2,000 words of ambiguous meaning in our ordinary vocabulary'.)

Now, the vast majority of these grammatical homophones are monosyllables: when we hear *consider* or *consideration*, we know at once that the former is a verb and the latter a substantive, but *look* may be either; *conversation* is a substantive, but *talk* is a substantive if preceded by *a* or *the*, &c., and a verb if preceded by *I* or *you* or *to*, &c. In 'he made love to her' *love* is a substantive, in 'he made her love him' the same form is a verb. But it is wrong to say, as is very often said even by excellent grammarians, that English mixes up the various parts of speech, or that it has given up the distinction between noun and verb, or uses its verbs as nouns and vice versa: English distinguishes these word-classes, only it does it in a different way from Old English and its congeners.<sup>1</sup>

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Words differ very much in respect of expressiveness, so ne words being felt as naturally appropriate for certain ideas and others less so. These different values of words, which the good stylist knows how to utilize, depend on a good many things of various kinds, but one among these is the comparative length, and with regard to monosyllables we must distinguish between the weak 'empty' words, which give elasticity and suppleness and variety to English sentences, and, on the other hand, the strong words of full meaning which give a manly vigour to those sentences in which they occur in great numbers.

<sup>1</sup> See my *Philosophy of Grammar*, pp. 52, 61, *Growth and Structure*, 5th ed., p. 151.

In echo-words we see a very significant difference between words of one syllable, expressive of sounds and movements which occur once, and words of two syllables which mean continuous sounds and movements; the latter are very often formed with the suffixes *-er* and *-le*, which are used in that way in a great many languages, even outside the Aryan world. On the one hand we thus have verbs like *rap*, *tap*, *smash*, on the other hand *rattle*, *babble*, *tinkle*, *clatter*, &c. Pretty often we have doublets like *nod*—*noddle*, *jog*—*joggle*, *sniff*—*sniffle*, *drip*—*dribble*, *whiff*—*whiffle*, *toot*—*tootle*, where the longer word is a frequentative of the shorter one.

Apart from echo-words we see something similar in the tendency to use the monosyllabic action-nouns which are identical in form with the infinitive of the verb for the instantaneous act and a longer form for continued action: the two words used in this definition may be our first examples, for *action* may to some extent be considered a kind of frequentative of *act*, though the distinction is not always maintained. The same may be said of *laugh* and *laughter* and of *move* and *motion* (and *movement*): a move in chess, an engine in motion; his short nervous laugh was the signal of general laughter.

Very often we see a distinction between such monosyllabic action-nouns and those ending in *-ing*, which denote prolonged or continuous action or a more or less permanent state: *a dream*—*dreaming*; 'Then came the *dancing*—the one *dance* after another' (Trollope); *a lie*—*lying*, and in the same way *a sail*, *a ride*, *a swim*, *a row*, *a talk*, *a read*, *a smoke*, *a kill*, *a try*, *a cry* compared with the corresponding words *sailing*, *riding*, &c.; note also the special meanings of such words as *a find*, *a meet*, &c.

A similar effect of the different length of two connected words is seen in the American, not British, differentiation between *luncheon* as the regular midday meal and *lunch* used of a small meal between the ordinary ones.

An analogous case is seen in the adverbs of time, where the short form *now* emphasizes the moment much more than the longer *nowadays*, which indicates a longer duration (thus also in other languages: Danish *nu*—*nutildags*, German *jetzt*—*heutzutage*). Something similar may be said of the relation between the two local adverbs *here* and *hereabouts*. We see, then, that in certain cases a definite relation ob-

tains between the length of a word and its meaning, and it may not be out of place here to mention the use of short petnames like *Ben* for *Benjamin* and *Em* for *Emmeline* or *Emily* as applied at first to small children, and finally the fact that *Miss*, the abbreviated form of *Mistress* (*Missis*), which at first was used in derision or scorn, in its present use generally implies youth in comparison with the more dignified, fuller designation; English thus denotes by the shortness of the form what in other languages is indicated by means of diminutive endings, German *fräulein*, French *demoiselle*, Italian *signorina*, &c.<sup>1</sup>

Let me try to sum up a few of the leading ideas of this lecture. The tendency towards monosyllabism, strong as it has been in the development of the English language, has not been overpowering: it has been counteracted not only by a great influx of foreign elements, but also by the intrinsic structure of the language itself and in some cases by a regard to clearness, thus in the case of the superlative ending *-est*. The loss of final sounds has in English, in contradistinction to French and Chinese, been chiefly confined to vowels, while final consonants, among them some of great importance in flexion, have been preserved; this has led to a frequent heaping of consonants in the end of words. The consequence of this as well as of the development of some new phonemes has been that there are many more possibilities of distinct monosyllables than in Chinese, and homophones are therefore much less numerous than in that language. The danger of ambiguity on that account is not very considerable; in the vast majority of cases the context, chiefly by means of small grammatical empty words, is quite sufficient to make the meaning clear and to show what part of speech a word belongs to. Short words are often understood kinematographically, and this may lead to idiomatic uses of monosyllables which have no parallels with longer words. In other cases we see that the very shortness or length of words is utilized for purposes of expressiveness, and in that as well as in other respects I hope to have shown that the study of monosyllabic and polysyllabic tendencies in a language like English is not devoid of interest.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. also my remarks on the emotional effect of shortening words, and of mouth-filling epithets, *Language*, p. 403



## THE NASAL IN *NIGHTINGALE*, etc.

A remark in Oertel's excellent *Lectures on the Study of Language* (New York and London 1901, p. 162) makes me think that the following notes may not be altogether superfluous. Oertel endorses Sweet's suggestion (New English Grammar § 1551) that the *n* (or rather *ŋ*) of *nightingale* (Old English *nihtegale*) may be due to associative interference of *evening*, and he graphically represents the manner in which the speaker's mind in the middle of the word is suddenly diverted to the final sounds of the word *evening*, to be, after pronouncing *-ing*, led back into the normal channel of the word *nihtegale*. Now I think this process in our case highly improbable. Why should an Englishman think of *evening* when pronouncing the name of that bird? Certainly, a Dane does not think of *aften* in pronouncing *nattergal*, nor, I fancy, a German of *abend* in saying *nachtigall*. The other cases given by Oertel (most of them from Meringer and Mayer) are different, for when a person wavering between *abschnitt* and *absatz*, engenders by a momentary confusion the form *abschnatt*, or when *evoid* is said instead of "both *avoid* and *evade*", etc., similarity of meaning and similarity of sound both go together to produce the contamination; but in our case there is absolutely no similarity of sound, and the similarity of meaning, which certainly exists between "evening" and "night", seems rather thinned out in the case of the bird. Besides, when the form *nihtingale* arose<sup>1</sup>, *eve(n)* was the ordinary form, *evening* being only used now and then for "the coming on of 'even', the process or fact of growing dusk" (NED.); the earliest quotation for *evening* as a synonym

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<sup>1</sup> According to Stratmann-Bradley this form is found as early as in the *Owl and Nightingale* (about 1225) by the side of the old form.



of *even* is from 1440. We must, therefore, be justified in looking round for another explanation, or, if no explanation is forthcoming, at any rate for parallel instances.

I. Intrusive [ŋ] before *g* is found in<sup>1)</sup>

*nihtegale* > *nightingale*.

*Portugal* > *Portyngale*, Caxton's *Reynard* 13; *Portingale*, Marlowe's *Tamburl.* 1351; "corrupt *Portingal* for *Portugal*" Salisbury in Ellis 757; "Portingal, for Portugal. When the Portuguese money (Portugal-pieces as they were called) was current in England, this word was in the mouth of every Cockney who had a *Portingal*-piece in his pocket", Pegge, *Anecdotes of the Engl. Language*, 2<sup>d</sup> ed. 1814 p. 62, where the note is added. "Holinshed, Stowe, and most of the old Chroniclers, write it *Portingale* . . . The Portuguese are called the Portingalls, in a letter from the Earl of Salisbury, A.D. 1607."

*martigale* > *martingale*. "Emprunté du provenç. mod. *martegalo*, tiré de *martegue* (en français le *Martigue*), petite ville sur l'étang de Berre", *Dict. général*, p. Hatzfeld, &c.

II. Intrusive [n] before [d:] is more frequent.

*messenger* still in Caxton, *e g* *Reynard* 18, 30, *Morte Darthur*, ed. Sommer, 35 etc > *messenger*. both *messenger* and *messanger* are found in Chaucer manuscripts.

*herberger* and other forms > *harbinger*. the *n*-form first found in the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

*passager* in North's *Plutarch* and Berners' *Froissart*, see *Encycl. Dict.* > *passenger*.

*porrager* (*potager*) > *porringer*: "potanger (which I thynke no man doth so write must be written for *potager*" Salisbury in Ellis, 757. El Coles, *Engl.-Lat. Dictionary* 1679, has "porrage jus, uris. porrenger scutella, gabata. pottage jus, jusculum. pottinger gabata, scutula." With regard to the *r* for *t* see my *Phonetik*, København 1899, p. 444.

\**wharfager* > *wharfinger* 'a person who owns or has the charge of a wharf', *wharfage* means 'duty paid for using a wharf, a wharf or wharfs collectively'. *Encycl. Dict.*

<sup>1)</sup> Part of the instances given here have already been collected by Matzner, *Engl. grammatik*, 1860, p. 174, and Ellis, *E.E.P.* 757 note 3.

*scavager* > *scavenger*, see Skeat.

*armiger* > *Armingier*, proper name.

Fr. *murager* > *murenger*.

*cottager* > *cottinger* in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries (NED.).

\**partager* > *partinger*, jocular or vulgar for *partner* (Muret, Brynildsen).

\**pollager* > *pollenger* 'pollard tree; brushwood'; Encycl. Dict. quotes Tusser's *Husbandrie*.

*papejay* (Chaucer B 1957) > *popinjay*.

I think we have here the explanation of the pronunciation of *St. Leger* as [sɪlɪndʒə]. And perhaps the name of *Birmingham* belongs here too. Storm (Engl. philol. 562) gives as the original form OE. *Bromwich-ham*; this accounts for the modern *Brummagem*<sup>1</sup>, still used as a nickname for the town as well as for "counterfeit, sham, not genuine" (NED.). With *n* inserted we get \**Brummingham* (or *Brummingeham*) or with "metathesis", resulting really in the substitution of [ʒ:] for [rɪ], the spoken form [bɹɪmɪndʒəm], which would be spelt *Birmingham*. This would make the present form a "spelling-pronunciation" — but unfortunately the NED. quotes (s. v. *Brummagem*) such old forms as *Bermingeham* and *Birmynge'ham*, which run counter to my explanation as well as to Storm's *Bromwichham*. I have no means of settling this difficulty just now, and so leave it to others.

But, whatever may be the real explanation of *Birmingham*, we may now formulate the following rule:

A nasal was very often inserted before [g] or [dʒ] in the weakly stressed middle syllable of a trisyllable stressed on the first syllable; the insertion took place in the Middle English period (generally towards the end of that period). The last syllable very likely had a secondary stress; in *manager* the *n* probably prevented the insertion.

This insertion has some parallels in Dutch, where, however, it was not limited to the same conditions; see, for instance, *visenteere* < Fr. *visiter*, *messengier* < Fr. *messenger*, *fansoen*

<sup>1</sup> For the voicing of [tʃ] into [dʒ], see my *Engelske Åusur*, 1891, 178 ff. esp. 189.

THE NASAL IN *NIGHTINGALE*, ETC.

< Fr. *façon*, *pampier* < *papier*, *komfoor* < Fr. *chauffoir*, etc.,  
quoted by S. de Grave in *Romania* XXX, 1901, p. 110.

Does this offer an explanation of the *n* in *nightingale*?  
Well, if the truth must be told, it explains it just as much  
or just as little as the immense majority of "sound-laws" given  
in philological books and periodicals explain the changes they  
deal with.

—*English Studien*, No. 31, 1902.

## NOTES ON METRE<sup>1</sup>

§ 1. The iambic pentameter may without any exaggeration be termed the most important metre of all in the literatures of the North-European world. Since Chaucer used it in its rimed form (the heroic line) and especially since Marlowe made it popular in the drama in its unrimed form (blank verse), it has been employed by Shakespeare, Milton, Dryden, Pope, Thomson, Cowper, Wordsworth, Byron, Shelley, Tennyson, by Lessing, Goethe, and Schiller, as well as by numerous Scandinavian poets, in a great many of their most important works. I shall here try to analyse some peculiarities of this metre, but my remarks are directly applicable to other metres as well and indirectly should bear on the whole metrical science, which, if I am right in the theories advanced below, would seem to require a fundamental revision of its principles, system of notation, and nomenclature.

According to the traditional notation the metre mentioned above consists of five iambs with or without an eleventh weak syllable:

— — | — — | — — | — — | — — | (—)

Her eyes, | her haire, | her cheeke, | her gate, | her voice. (1)

Give ev' | ry man | thine ear', | but few | thy voyce: | (2)

Take each | mans cen | sure, but | reserve | thy judg' | ment.<sup>2</sup> (3)

Ein un | nütz Le | ben ist | ein früh | er Tod. (4)

Zufrie | den wär' | ich, wenn | mein Volk | mich rühm | te. (5)

<sup>1</sup> Read in Danish in the "Kgl. danske videnskabernes selskab" on the 16. Nov. 1900, printed as "Den psykologiske grund til nogle metriske fænomen" in *Overigt* 1900 p. 487. Here translated with a few re-arrangements and many omissions, chiefly with regard to Danish and German examples and the refutation of the views of the Danish metrist E. v. d. Recke.

<sup>2</sup> The places from which quotations are taken will be indicated at the end of the paper. Quotations from Shakespeare are given in the spelling of the 1623 folio, except

§ 2. But pretty often we find deviations from this scheme, a "trochee" being substituted for an "iambus". This phenomenon, which may be called briefly inversion, is especially frequent in the first foot, as in

—    —    —    —    —    —    —  
Told by|an id|iot, full|of sound|and fu|ry. (1)

Even two "trochees" may be found in the same line, as in

—    —    —    —    —    —    —  
Tyrants|themselves|wept when|it was|report|ed (2)

Ihn freu|et der|Besitz;|ihn krönt|der Sieg (*ihn* emphatic). (3)

Why, now, are such inversions allowed? How is it that the listener's sense of rhythm is not offended by the fact that once or even twice in the same line he hears the very opposite movement of the one he expected, a "trochee" instead of an "iambus"? He expects a certain pattern, a regular alternation in one particular way of ten syllables, and his disappointment at encountering one trochee can be mathematically expressed as affecting two tenths of the whole line; in the case of two trochees his disappointment is one of four tenths or two fifths; and yet he has nothing like the feeling of displeasure or disharmony which would seize him if in a so-called "hexameter" like

Strongly it bears us along in swelling and limitless billows—an "anapaest" were substituted for a "dactylus":

It is strong, bears us along in swelling and limitless billows;  
or if in

Jack is a poor widow's heir, but he lives as a drone in a beehive—we substituted an "amphibrach":

Behold a poor widow's heir, but he lives as a drone in a beehive.

Naturally science cannot rest contented by calling deviations "poetical licences" or by saying that the whole thing depends on individual fancy or habit: as poets in many countries, however different their verse is in various other respects, follow very nearly the same rules, and to a great extent followed these before they were

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that sometimes an apostrophe is substituted for a mute *e*, and that the modern distinction of *u* and *i*, and of *j* and *i* is carried through.

established by theorists, there must be some common basis for these rules, and it will be our task to find out what that basis is.

§ 3. The permissibility of a trochee in an iambic metre is very often justified by the assertion that purely iambic lines following one another without intermission would be intolerably monotonous and that therefore a trochee here and there serves to introduce the pleasing effect of variety.<sup>1</sup> But there are several objections to this view. In the first place even a long series of perfectly regular lines are not disagreeably monotonous if written by a real poet. In one of Shakespeare's finest scenes we find in the first hundred lines not more than four inversions (*As you like it* II. 7); it can hardly be those four lines which make the whole scene so pleasing to the ear. In Valborg's speech in Oehlenschläger's *Axel og Valborg* III.69 we have 28 beautiful lines without a single deviation from the iambic scheme.

Secondly, if harmony were due to such irregularities, it would be natural to expect the same effect from similar deviations in trochaic and other metres. The reader of Longfellow's *Hiawatha* will no doubt feel its metre as much more monotonous than the five-foot iambus, yet here no deviations would be tolerated; an iambus in a trochaic metre is an unwelcome intruder, while a trochee in an iambic line is hailed as a friendly guest.

Thirdly, the theory gives no explanation of the fact that the use of trochees is subject to some limitations; if the only purpose were to relieve monotony, one would expect trochees to be equally welcome everywhere in iambic verses, but that is very far from being the case. True, the rare occurrence of trochees in the fifth foot is explained by saying that deviations from the ordinary pattern are always best tolerated in the beginning of the verse, because then there is still time to return to the regular movement. But if this were the only reason, we should expect trochees to tend to decrease as we approached the end of the line, the second foot presenting more instances than the third, and the third than the fourth; but this again does not tally with the actual facts, for the second foot has fewer

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[<sup>1</sup> "Their attractiveness may be due precisely to the fact that the accent of the first foot comes as a surprise to the reader", Sonnenschein, *Rhythm* 105 ]

inversions than any other foot except the fifth. König gives the following numbers for Shakespeare:

first foot more than	3000,
second foot only	34,
third foot more than	500,
fourth foot more than	400.

(*Der Vers in Shakespeares Dramen*. Strassburg 1888, Quellen und Forschungen 61, p. 79, cf. 77. Only "worttrochäen" are here numbered, not "satztrochäen".)

§ 4. If we are to arrive at a real understanding of the metre in question and of modern metre in general, it will be necessary to revise many of the current ideas which may be traced back to ancient metrists, and to look at the facts as they present themselves to the unsophisticated ears of modern poets and modern readers. The chief fallacies that it is to my mind important to get rid of, are the following:

(1) *The fallacy of longs and shorts*. Modern verses are based primarily not on length (duration), but on stress (intensity). In analysing them we should therefore avoid such signs as — and ˘, and further get rid of such terms as iambus (˘—), trochee (—˘), dactylus (—˘˘), anapaest (˘˘—), pyrrhic (˘˘), choriamb (—˘˘˘), etc. To speak of an iambus and interpret the term as a foot consisting of one weak and one strong syllable is not quite so harmless a thing as to speak of consuls and mean something different from the old Roman consules. It is not merely a question of nomenclature: the old names will tend to make us take over more than the terms of the old metrists.—There are other misleading terms: what some call "arsis" is by others termed "thesis", and inversely.

(2) *The fallacy of the foot*, i. e. the analysis of a line as consisting of parts divided off by means of perpendicular straight lines —|—|—| etc. Such signs of separation can only delude the reader into "scanning" lines with artificial pauses between the feet—often in the middle of words and in other most unnatural places. On the other hand a natural pause, occasioned by a break in the meaning, may be found in the middle of a foot as well as between

metrical feet. It is also often arbitrary where we put the division-mark: Are we to scan Tennyson's line

The de|light of|happy|laughter—or  
The delight|of hap|py laugh|ter?

The line mentioned above (§ 1, 1) is analysed by E. K. (now Sir Edmund) Chambers in his Warwick ed. of Macbeth as having "the stress inverted in every foot" and a dactylus in the first:

Told' by an|i'diot,|full'of|sound' and|fu'ry.

Some metrists (Bayfield among them) even incline to treat such lines as § 1.3 as "trochaic" with an anacrusis:

Take|each mans|censure,|but re|serve thy|judg'ment.

In such cases it would almost seem as if the vertical stroke were used as the bar in music, to indicate where the strong note or stress begins, though most metrists would deny the legitimacy of that analogy.

We shall see below that the abolition of the fallacy of the foot will assist us in understanding the chief irregularities of blank verse.

(3) *The fallacy of two grades.* The ancients recognized only longs and shorts though there are really many gradations of length of syllables. In the same way most of the moderns, while recognizing that stress is the most important thing in modern metres, speak of two grades only, calling everything weak that is not strong. But in reality there are infinite gradations of stress, from the most penetrating scream to the faintest whisper; but in most instances it will be sufficient for our purposes to recognize four degrees which we may simply designate by the first four numbers:

- 4 strong
- 3 half-strong
- 2 half-weak
- 1 weak.

It is not always easy to apply these numbers to actually occurring syllables, and it is particularly difficult in many instances to distinguish between 3 and 2. Unfortunately we have no means of measuring stress objectively by instruments; we have nothing to go by except our ears; but then it is a kind of consolation that the poets themselves, whose lines we try to analyse, have been guided by nothing



else but *their* ears—and after all, the human ear is a wonderfully delicate apparatus.

§ 5. Verse rhythm is based on the same alternation between stronger and weaker syllables as that found in natural everyday speech. Even in the most prosaic speech, which is in no way dictated by artistic feeling, this alternation is not completely irregular: everywhere we observe a natural tendency towards making a weak syllable follow after a strong one and inversely. Rhythm very often makes itself felt in spite of what might be expected from the natural (logical or emotional) value of the words. Thus syllables which ought seemingly to be strong are weakened if occurring between strong syllables, and naturally weak syllables gain in strength if placed between weak syllables. *Uphill* is 24 in *to walk uphill*, but 42 in *an uphill walk*. *Good-natured* is 44, but becomes 43 or 42 in *a good-natured man*. The last syllable of *afternoon* is strong (4) in *this afternoon*, but weaker (2 or 3) in *afternoon tea*. *Back* is weaker in *he came back tired* than in *he came back with sore feet*, etc.

Illustrations of this principle are found in the following verse lines in which the middle one of the three italicized syllables is weakened, giving 434 (or 424) instead of 444:

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| But <i>poore old man</i> , thou prun'st a rotten tree.                      | (1) |
| The course of <i>true love never</i> did run smooth.                        | (2) |
| Oh that this <i>too too solid</i> flesh would melt.                         | (3) |
| You are my ghests: do me no <i>foule play, friends</i> .                    | (4) |
| The <i>still sad music</i> of humanity.                                     | (5) |
| A <i>long street climbs</i> to <i>one tall-tower'd</i> mill.                | (6) |
| Doch sein geschwungner <i>Arm traf ihre Brust</i> ( <i>ihre emphatic</i> ). | (7) |

§ 6. Of two successive weak syllables that one is the relatively stronger which is the further removed from the strongly stressed syllable; consequently we have the formula 412 in *happily, gossiping, lexicon, apricot, Socrates*, etc., and the inverse 214 (or 314) in *condescend, supersede, disinter*; 2141 in *collocation, expectation, intermixture*, 21412 in *conversational, international, regularity*.

The effect of surroundings is seen clearly in the following line, where *when one* is 23 after the strong *know*, and 32 before the strong *lives*:

I know when one is dead, and when one lives. (1)

Other examples (*I, and, when*—now “weak”, now “strong” without regard to meaning) are found in the passage analysed below in § 24. *It is* according to circumstances may be 12 or 21, and the same is true of *into* in Shakespeare and other poets. *Is* is “strong”, i.e. 2 between two weak syllables (1) in

A thing of beauty is a joy for ever—

and any page of poetry affords examples of the same phenomenon.

§ 7. Our ear does not really perceive stress relations with any degree of certainty except when the syllables concerned are contiguous. If two syllables are separated by a series of other syllables, it is extremely difficult even for the expert to tell which of them is the stronger, as one will feel when comparing the syllables of such or long word as *incomprehensibility*: *bil* is the strongest, *ben* is stronger than both *pre* and *si*, but what is the relation between *ben* and *vom*? or between *in* and *ty*? Another similar word is *irresponsibility*, only here the first syllable is stronger than the second. What is decisive when words have to be used in verse is everywhere the surroundings: the metrical value of a syllable depends on what comes before and what follows after it.

Even more important is the fact that we have to do with *relative degrees of force only*: a sequence of syllables, a verse line may produce exactly the same metrical impression whether I pronounce it so softly that it can scarcely be heard at two feet's distance, or shout it so loudly that it can be distinctly perceived by everyone in a large theatre; but the strongest syllables in the former case may have been weaker than the very weakest ones in the latter case.

§ 8. This leads us to another important principle: the effect of a *pause*: If I hear a syllable after a pause it is absolutely impossible for me to know whether it is meant by the speaker as a strong or as a weak syllable: I have nothing to compare it with till I hear what follows. And it is extremely difficult to say with any degree of certainty what is the reciprocal relation between two syllables separated by a not too short pause.

§ 9. Let us now try to apply these principles to the “iambic pentameter”. The pattern expected by the hearer is a sequence of ten syllables (which may be followed by an eleventh, weak syllable), ar-

ranged in such a way that the syllables occupying the even places are raised by their force above the surrounding syllables. It is not possible to say that the scheme is

$$14 \quad 14 \quad 14 \quad 14 \quad 14 \quad (1),$$

for this is a rare and not particularly admired form, as in

Her eyes, her haire, her cheek, her gate, her voice. (1)

Of hairs, or straws, or dirt, or grubs, or worms. (2)

Lines of that type were pretty numerous in the earliest days of blank verse, in Gorboduc and in Peele. But it was soon felt that it was much more satisfactory to make the difference in force between the strong and the weak elements of the line less than that between 1 and 4 and at the same time less uniform, for the only thing required by the ear is an upward and a downward movement, a rise and a fall, an ascent and a descent, at fixed places, whereas it is of no importance whatever how great is the ascent or the descent. It is therefore possible to arrange the scheme in this way, denoting the odd syllables by *a* and the even ones by *b*:

$$a \diagup b \diagdown a \diagup b \diagdown a \diagup b \diagdown a \diagup b \diagdown a \diagup b (\diagdown a) \sim$$

or, if we denote relative strength by a capital,

$$aBaBaBaB(a).$$

§ 10. It is the relative stress that counts. This is shown conclusively when we find that a syllable with stress-degree 2 counts as strong between two 1s, though it is in reality weaker than another with degree 3 which fills a weak place in the same line because it happens to stand between two 4s. This is, for instance, the case in

The course of true love never did run smooth (1):

*did* (2) occupies a strong place though no sensible reader would make it as strong as *love*, which counts as weak in the verse.

In consequence of this relativity it is possible on the one hand to find lines with many weak syllables, e.g.

It is a nipping and an eager ayre. (2)

Here *is* and *and* on account of the surroundings are made into 2s; the line contains not a single long consonant and only two long vowels.

On the other hand there are lines with many strong and long syllables, such as

And ten low words oft creep in one dull line. (3)  
 The long day wanes: the slow moon climbs: the deep  
 Moans round with many voices. (4)  
 Thoughts blacke, hands apt, drugges fit, and time agreeing. (5)  
 Day, night, houre, tide, time, worke, and play. (6)  
 Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades of death. (7)

In lines like the last two, however, the pauses make the regular alternation of 3 and 4 difficult or even impossible.

With inversion in the beginning we have Browning's dreadfully heavy

Spark-like mid unearthed slope-side figtree-roots (8).

A comparison of such extremes of light and heavy lines shows conclusively that *quantity as such has no essential importance in the building up of blank verse*.

The principle of relativity allows an abundance of variety; there are many possible harmonious and easy-flowing verses, with five, or four, or three really strong syllables (degree 4); and the variety can be further increased by means of pauses, which may be found between the lines or at almost any place in the lines themselves, whether between or in the middle of so-called feet.

So much for the normal "iambic pentameter".

§ 11. Let us now analyse a line with inversion, e.g.

Peace, children, peace! the king doth love you well. (1)

The stress numbers for the first four syllables are 4314 (or possibly 4214, though 3 seems more likely than 2 for the second syllable). Here the ear is not disappointed in the first syllable: after the pause preceding the line one does not know what general level to expect: a syllable which objectively is pretty strong might turn out to be a relatively weak introduction to something still stronger. A mathematician might feel tempted to express this in the following way: the proportion between the 0 of the pause and the 4 of a strong syllable is the same as between 0 and the 1 of a weak syllable.

It is therefore not till this strong syllable is followed by one that is weaker instead of stronger that the ear experiences a disappointment and feels a deviation from the regular pattern. But the transition from the second to the third syllable is a descent in strict conformity with the pattern; and in the same way there is perfect

regularity in the relation between the third and the (strong) fourth, and indeed in the whole of the rest of the line. The scheme accordingly is the following:

$a \backslash b \backslash a / b \backslash a / b \backslash a / b \backslash a / b$ ,

which should be compared with the scheme given above, § 9, as normal.

This amounts to saying that while according to the traditional way of notation one would think that the departure from the norm concerned two-tenths (one-fifth) of the line if one heard a "trochee" instead of an "iambus", the ear is really disappointed at one only out of ten places. The deviation from the norm is thus reduced to one-tenth—or even less than that, because the descent is only a small one. The greater the descent, the greater will also be the dissatisfaction, but in the example analysed the descent was only from 4 to 3. A beginning 4114 is comparatively poor, but 4314 or 4214 does not sound badly, for from the second syllable (or from the transition to the third) one has the feeling that everything is all right and the movement is the usual one. In the case of two inversions in the same line we have in two places (not in four!) disappointments, each of them amounting to less than one-tenth, and so far separated from the other that they do not act jointly on the ear.

§ 12. We shall now collect some classified examples which tend to show that poets have instinctively followed this hitherto never formulated principle.

A. First we have instances in which the three syllables concerned belong to the same word. Such words, of the stress-formula 431 or 421, are very frequent in Danish and German; I have therefore been able to find a great many lines like the following:

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| Sandhedens kilder i dets bund udstrømme.     | (1) |
| Staldbroder! hav tålmodighed med Axel.       | (2) |
| Granvoxne Valborg! — Elskelige svend!        | (3) |
| Kraftvolles mark war seiner söhn' und enkel. | (4) |
| Unedel sind die waffen eines weibes.         | (5) |
| Hilfreiche götter vom Olympus rufen.         | (6) |

In English, on the other hand, words of this type are comparatively rare, and in Elizabethan times there was a strong tendency to shift

the stress rhythmically so as to have 412 instead of 431 or 421, thus in *torchbearer*, *quicksilver*, *bedfellow*, etc. (references in my *Modern Engl. Gr.* I 5.45). Cf. also the treatment of *berry* in *gooseberry*, *blackberry*, and of *kerchief* in *handkerchief*. But we have 431 in

- Sleek-headed men, and such as sleepe a-nights. (7)  
 Grim-visag'd warre hath smooth'd his wrinkled front. (8)  
 All-seeing heaven, what a world is this? (9)

§ 13. B. The first two syllables form one word.

- Doomesday is neere, dye all, dye merrily. (1)  
 Welcome, Sir Walter Blunt, and would to God ... (2)  
 England did never owe so sweet a hope. (3)  
 Something that hath a reference to my state. (4)  
 Nothing that I respect, my gracious lord. (5)  
 Ofspring of Heav'n and Earth, and all Earths Lord. (6)  
 Noontide repast, or Afternoons repose. (7)

This is frequent in Danish:

- Valborg skal vorde Axel Thordsøns brud. (8)  
 Alting er muligt for et trofast hjerte. (9)

§ 14. C. The first word is one syllable, the second two or more.

- Urge neither charity nor shame to me. (1)  
 Dye neyther mother, wife, nor Englands queene! (2)  
 Peace, master marquesse, you are malapert. (3)  
 Peace, children, peace! the king doth love you well. (4)  
 First, madam, I intreate true peace of you. (5)

Danish and German examples:

- Tak, høje fader, for din miskundhed! (6)  
 Spar dine ord! Jeg kender ikke frygt. (7)  
 Den bære kronen som er kronen voxen. (8)  
 Frei atmen macht das leben nicht allein. (9)  
 Sie rettet weder hoffnung, weder furcht. (10)

In cases like the following one may hesitate which of the first two syllables to make 4 and which 3:

- Yong, valiant, wise, and (no doubt) right royal. (11)  
 Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears. (12)  
 Foule wrinkled witch, what mak'st thou in my sight? (13)  
 Ros, rygte, folkesnak i sold den ta'er. (14)  
 Rat, mässigung und weisheit und geduld. (15)

§ 15. D. Two monosyllables.

Here there will naturally be a great many cases in which the correct distribution of stresses is not self-evident: one reader will stress the first and another the second word. I think however that in the following lines most readers will agree with me in stressing 4314 or 4214 (or 5314):

- Long may'st thou live, to wayle thy childrens death. (1)  
 Greefe fills the roome up of my absent childe. (2)  
 God will revenge it. Come, lords, will you go. (3)  
*Their* woes are parcell'd, mine is generall. (4)  
 Sweet are the uses of adversitie. (5)  
 Lye there what hidden womans feare there will. (6)  
 Cours'd one another downe his innocent nose. (7)  
 Knap var det sagt, så stod for dem den tykke. (8)  
 Klog mand foragter ej sin stærke fjende. (9)  
 Dank habt ihr stets. Doch nicht den reinen dank. (10)  
 Wohl dem, der seiner väter gern gedenkt. (11)

In the middle of a line:

- As it is wonne with blood, *lost be it* so. (12)  
 Den nordiske natur. *Alt skal du* skue. (13)  
 So kehr zurück! *Thu, was dein* Herz dich heisst. (14)

§ 16. While in the lines examined so far a natural reading will stress the second syllable more than the third, it must be admitted that there are many lines in which the words themselves do not demand this way of stressing. Nevertheless the possibility exists that the poet had it in his mind, and expert elocutionists will often unconsciously give a stronger stress to the second syllable just to minimize the deviation from the scheme and avoid the unpleasant effect of the sequence 4114. I think this is quite natural in cases like

the following, in which a proper name or another important word calls for an emphatic enunciation which makes the second syllable stronger than it might have been in easy-going prose:

- Clarence* still breathes; *Edward* still lives and raignes. (1)  
*Never* came poyson from so sweet a place. (2)  
*Never* hung poyson on a fowler toade. (3)  
*Tyrants* themselves wept when it was reported. (4)  
Hakon er konge, Valborg er en mø. (5)  
Himlen er ej så blå som disse blomster. (6)

Even in a line like:

- Cowards dye many times before their deaths (7)

an actor may feel inclined to express his contempt and to point the contrast to the following words "The valiant never taste of death but once" by giving special stress (53 or 54) to *cowards* and by extra stress on *many* to weigh down *die* to something comparatively insignificant, which is all the more natural as the idea of death has been mentioned in the preceding lines, while *cowards* is a new idea: new ideas are well known to attract strong stress. It is worth noting how often the figure is used as a rhetorical device to emphasize a contrast, in exclamations and in personal apostrophe (cf. König, p. 78). It is particularly apt for this use because a forcible attack of the voice after a pause will immediately catch the attention, before the verse settles down in its usual even course.

§ 17. In spite of all this there will remain some instances in which the second syllable cannot easily be made stronger than the third. Metrics is no exact science aiming at finding out natural laws that are valid everywhere. All we can say is that by arranging syllables in such and such a way the poet will produce a pleasing effect; but of course a poet is free to sacrifice euphony if other things appear more important to him—not to mention the possibility that he is momentarily unable to hit upon anything more felicitous.

§ 18. In all the cases dealt with in the preceding paragraphs there was a pause immediately before the strong syllable which had taken the place of a weak. The pause is often, but of course not everywhere indicated by a full stop or other punctuation mark. A natural



explanation of the varying frequency of inversion at different places in the line (see above § 3) is found in the fact that a pause is not equally natural at all places. In the vast majority of cases inversion is found at the very beginning of a line, because the end of the preceding line is more often than not marked by a break in the thought and, even where this is not the case, a reciter or actor will often make a pause between two lines. Not quite so frequently comes a pause and inversion in the middle of a line, after the second or third "foot". It is necessarily rarer after the first foot, because a division of the line into two such unequal parts (2 + 8 syllables) is not natural: the two syllables are awkwardly isolated and cut off from organic cohesion with the rest. This is even more true of a pause after the eighth syllable: a strong syllable here will not leave us time enough to regain the natural swing of the verse before the line is ended. In such a case as

It is his Highnesse pleasure, that the Queene  
Appeare in person here in Court. Silence! (1)

it would not even be unnatural to shout out the two last syllables as 44 or 45.

§ 19. In yet another way a pause may play an important role in the verse. If we analyse the following lines in the usual way we find that the syllables here italicized form trochees where we should expect iambs, and if we read them without stopping they are felt to be inharmonious:

- |  |      |
|--|------|
| Like to a step- <i>dame</i> , or a dowager.                    | (1)  |
| Lye at the proud <i>foote of</i> a conqueror.                  | (2)  |
| As wilde- <i>geese</i> , that the creeping fowler eye.         | (3)  |
| And let the soule <i>forth that</i> adareth thee.              | (4)  |
| To bear the file's <i>tooth and</i> the hammer's tap.          | (5)  |
| John of the Black <i>Bands with</i> the upright spear.         | (6)  |
| A snow- <i>flake</i> , and a scanty couch of snow              |      |
| Crusted the grass- <i>walk and</i> the garden-mould.           | (7)  |
| Den, der er blind- <i>født eller</i> blind fra barndom.        | (8)  |
| Nu, det var smukt <i>gjort, det</i> var vel gjort, godt gjort. | (9)  |
| Denn ihr allein <i>wisst, was</i> uns frommen kann.            | (10) |

If, on the other hand, we read these lines with the pause required (or allowed) by the meaning, the ear will not be offended in the least. The line is in perfect order, because in the first place *dame* with its 3 is heard together with *step* (4) and thus shows a descent in the right place, and secondly *or* with its 2 is heard in close connexion with *a* (1), so that we have the required descent between these two syllables. Graphically:

Like to	a step-	dame, or	a dow	ager
.....	iamb	trochee	iamb	....
.....	1 4	3 2	1 4	.....
.....	a/b	\ a(\) b \	a/b	.....

The descent marked in parenthesis between *dame* and *or* is not heard, and is thus non-existent. Similarly in the other examples.<sup>1</sup>

§ 20. The phenomena dealt with here (in § 12 ff. and 19) are singularly fit to demonstrate the shortcomings of traditional metrics (cf. above § 4). In the first case (inversion after a pause) we had a "trochee", whose second syllable acts in connexion with the first syllable of the following foot, as if the latter had been the second syllable of an iambus. In the second case (§ 19) we had a "trochee" whose first syllable as a matter of fact will be perceived in the verse as if it were the first part of an iambus, and whose second syllable is similarly playing the role of the latter part of an iambus, and yet it is impossible to call these two successive iambic syllables a real iambus. In both cases the ear thus protests against the paper idea of a "foot". In the former case the perpendicular line | is made to separate the two syllables whose mutual relation is really of great rhythmic importance and which accordingly ought to go together. In the latter case two similar straight lines join together syllables which are not to be heard together, and whose relation to one another is therefore of no consequence, while the syllables that have to be weighed against one another are by the same means separated as if they did not concern one another. Could anything be more absurd?

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<sup>1</sup> A corresponding interpretation of the metre of Shakespeare's *Lucrece* 1611 and 1612 is found in A. P. van Dam, *W. Shakespeare, Prosody and Text*, Leyden 1900, p. 206.

§ 21. The irregularities in lines like

And they shall be one Flesh, one Heart, one Soule. (1)  
The wretched annimall heav'd forth such groanes (2)

might be explained by means of a pause after *be* and *animal*: *shall* *be* is 12, and *one flesh* 34, and similarly *animal* is 412 and *heav'd forth* 34, but the irregular ascent between 2 and 3 is concealed by the pause: 1/2(✓)3/4 or a/b(✓)a/b.

This explanation does not, however, hold good for numerous groups of a similar structure, e.g.

*In the sweet pangs* of it remember me. (3)  
*And the free maides* that weave their thred with bones. (4)  
*In the deepe bosome* of the ocean buried. (5)  
*But the quenes kindred* and night-walking heralds. (6)  
*Of the young prince* your sonne: send straight for him. (7)  
*I will feede fat* the ancient grudge I beare him. (8)  
*As his wise mother* wrought in his behalfe. (9)  
*Of a strange nature* is the sute you follow. (10)  
*Whose homes are the dim caves* of human thought. (11)  
*The ploughman lost his sweat, and the greene coine.* (12)  
*Did I deserve no more then a fooles head?* (13)

This figure is frequent in English verse, but not in other languages. I incline to read it with 1234 and thus to say that the ascent is normal between the first and the second as well as between the third and the fourth syllable, so that there is only the one small anomaly of a slight ascent instead of a descent between the second and the third syllable. It is worth noting how frequently this figure contains an adjective (stressed 3) before a substantive (stressed 4); *fool's* before *head* is equivalent to an adjective.

Some metrists here speak of a double iambus (— — — —). Robert Bridges (*Milton's Prosody*, 1894, p. 56) calls it "a foot of two unstressed short syllables preceding a foot composed of two heavy syllables" and says, "Whatever the account of it is, it is pleasant to the ear even in the smoothest verse, and is so, no doubt, by a kind of compensation in it".

§ 22. The role of a pause which covers and hides away metrical

irregularities is seen also in the case of extra-metrical syllables. In Shakespeare these are particularly frequent where a line is distributed between two speakers. The pause makes us forget how far we had come: one speaker's words are heard as the regular beginning, and the next speaker's as the regular ending of a verse, and we do not feel that we have been treated to too much, though this would not pass equally unnoticed if there had been no break. Examples may be found in any book on Shakespeare's verse;<sup>1</sup> one occurs in the passage of Henry IV analysed below (§ 24, line 33). An interesting use of an extra-metrical syllable is made in King Lear IV. 1. 72

(Let the superfluous ... man ... that will not see,)

Because he do's not feele, feele your power quickly:

the second *feel*, which is necessary for the meaning, is heard as a kind of echo of the first and therefore enters into its place in the line.

§ 23. There is one phenomenon which is even more curious than those mentioned so far, namely that which Abbott has termed *amphibious section*. Recent metrists do not as a rule acknowledge it, but its reality seems indisputable. It will not be found in poets who write for the eye, but Shakespeare was thinking of the stage only and was not interested in the way his plays would look when they were printed. He could therefore indulge in sequences like the following:

He but usurpt his life. | Beare them from hence. | Our present  
 businesse | is generall woe. | Friends of my soule, you twaine |  
 Rule in this realme | and the gor'd state sustaine. (1)

This is a sequence of 6 + 4 + 6 + 4 + 6 + 4 + 6 syllables, and in all the places here marked | (except perhaps two) a pause is necessary; after *life* a new speaker begins. The audience will not be able to notice that anything is missing: they will hear the first 6 + 4 as a full line, but the same four syllables go together with the following six to form another full line, and so on. A modern editor is in a difficult dilemma, for whichever way he prints the passage one line is sure to be too short:

<sup>1</sup> But it is necessary to read these writers with a critical mind, for very often lines are given as containing such supernumerary syllables which are perfectly regular in Shakespeare's pronunciation, e.g.

I am more an antique Roman than a Dane (I am = I'm).

The light and careless livery that it wears (livery = livry).

He but usurped his life. Bear them from hence.  
 Our present business is general woe.  
 Friends of my soul, you twain  
 Rule in this realm and the gored state sustain,

or

He but usurped his life.  
 Bear them from hence. Our present business  
 Is general, etc.

A second example is:

Utter your gravitie ore a gossips bowles,	
For here we need it not.   — You are too hot.	6 + 4
Gods bread! it makes me mad.   (2)	6

or

For here we need it not.—	6
You are too hot. Gods bread! it makes me mad.	4 + 6

And a third:

Who, I, my lord! We know each others faces,	
But for our hearts,   he knowes no more of mine	4 + 6
Then I of yours;	4
Nor I no more of his, <sup>1</sup>   then you of mine.	6 + 4
Lord Hastings, you and he   are neere in love.   (3)	6 + 4

Such passages are thus elaborate acoustic delusions which are not detected on account of the intervening pauses.

§ 24. It may not be amiss here to give the analysis of a connected long passage according to the principles advocated in this paper. The passage (Henry IV A I. 3. 29 ff.) is metrically of unusual interest.

29 My liege, I did deny no prisoners.  
 30 But I remember when the fight was done,  
     When I was dry with rage and extreame toyle,  
     Breathlesse and faint, leaning upon my sword,  
     Came there a certain lord, neat and trimly drest,

---

<sup>1</sup> Folio Or I of his, my Lord.

- 34 Fresh as a bride-groome, and his chin new reapt  
 Shew'd like a stubble land at harvest-home.  
 He was perfumed like a milliner,  
 And 'twixt his finger and his thumbe he held
- 38 A pouncet-box, which ever and anon  
 He gave his nose, and took't away againe:  
 Who therewith angry, when it next came there,  
 Tooke it in snuffe: and still he smil'd and talk'd:
- 42 And as the souldiers bare dead bodies by,  
 He call'd them untaught knaves, unmannerly,  
 To bring a slovenly unhandsome coarse
- 45 Betwixt the wind and his nobility.

Line 29. *I* in weak position, but in 30 and 31 in strong position (2) on account of the surroundings, § 9. Similarly *when* strong (2) in line 30, but degree 1 in line 31.

Line 31. *Extreme* with rhythmic stress on *ex-* on account of its position before a strongly stressed word, see A. Schmidt, *Sb-Lex.* II, p. 1413, my *Mod. Engl. Gr.* I 5. 53 f., above § 5. In the same way *untaught* line 43, but *unmannerly* and *unhandsome* with weak *un*.

Line 32 two examples of inversion, § 13.

Line 33. Which of the two words *Came there* is the stronger, may be doubtful, § 15.—*Neat* an extra-metrical syllable, which is not felt as such on account of the pause, § 22.

Line 34 beginning inversion according to § 15.—*groom* 3, and 2 with pause between them, § 19; *new* 3 between two 4's, § 5.

Line 35. *Showed like* inversion § 15.

Line 36. *Was* 2, stronger than *he* and *per-*. *Perfumed* 141. This is the ordinary stressing of the verb, also in our times; but in H4B III. 1. 12 we have rhythmic shifting 41 before 4: "Then in the perfum'd chambers of the great".—*Like* 2 as in preceding line.

Line 37. First *and* 1, second *and* 2 between weak syllables, § 6. The two following *ands* also 2; this is likewise the case with *when* in line 40.

Line 41 inversion § 17.

Line 42 *As* 2 § 6, but *dead* 3 or 2 between strong syllables, § 5.

Line 43 *untaught* see above.

Line 44 *slovenly* 412 or perhaps 413 before *un-*, § 6.

Line 45 *his* 2 or 3, probably not emphatic.

§ 25. We have not yet offered an answer to the question raised in § 2: why is a trochee among iambs easier to tolerate than inversely an iamb among trochees? But the answer is not difficult on the principles we have followed throughout. Take some trochaic lines, e.g.

Tell me not, in mournful numbers,  
Life is but an empty dream—

and substitute for the second line something like

A life's but an empty dream,—or  
To live's but an empty dream.

The rhythm is completely spoilt. Or try instead of

Then the little Hiawatha  
Learned of every bird its language—

to say:

The sweet little Hiawatha  
Acquired every sound and language.

(*Every* of course in two syllables as in Longfellow).

In such cases with 14 instead of 41 we have the disagreeable clash of two strong syllables, further, we have two disappointments per line. It is true that if we pronounced the first strong syllable weaker than the second, thus made the whole 1341, we should have only one disappointment:  $a \nearrow b \nearrow a \searrow b$  instead of the regular  $a \searrow b \nearrow a \searrow b$ ; but it will be extremely hard to find examples of the sequence 34 as regularly occurring in any of the cognate languages. We shall see in the next paragraph the reason why 34 is not found within one and the same word; and when a word of the formula 14 is placed before a strongly stressed word, it is not generally reduced to 13, as the ordinary tendency in such cases is rather to substitute for it 31 or 21, see many examples from English in my *Mod. E. Gr.* I 156 ff.: "The other *upon* Saturn's bended neck" (Keats), "Protracted *among* endless solitudes" (Wordsworth), "a spirit *without* spot" (Shelley), "in *forlorn* servitude" (Wordsworth). Danish examples see *Moders-*

*målets fonetik* 139. The disinclination to “invert” in trochaic rhythms is thus seen to be deeply rooted in linguistic habits and in the phonetic structure of our languages.

§ 25. What is the essential difference between a rising and a falling rhythm? (or, in the old terms, between an “iambic” or “anapaestic” rhythm on the one hand and a “trochaic” or “dactylic” rhythm on the other?) Some writers minimize this difference and say that they are virtually identical, as the “anacrusis” has no real importance; instead of the sequence 14 14 14... (—| —| —| —| ...) they would write 1 41 41 41..., (—| —| —| —| ...). According to them the initial weak syllable is just as unimportant as an up-beat (auftakt, mesure d’attaque) is in music.

But is such an up-beat (a note before the first bar begins) really unimportant in music? I have taken a number of music books at random and counted the pieces in which such an up-beat occurs; I found that it was less frequent in pieces with a slow movement (largo, grave, adagio, andante) than in those with a quick movement (allegro, allegretto, rondo, presto, prestissimo, vivace):

	Beethoven	Schubert	Schumann	Sum
Slow				
with up-beat .....	5	1	5	11
without up-beat .....	17	7	7	31
Quick				
with up-beat .....	31	14	12	57
without up-beat .....	19	11	10	40

This agrees with the general impression of verse rhythms: a sequence *didúm didúm didúm ...* tends to move more rapidly than *dúmda dúmda dúmda ...* I think this depends on a deeply rooted psychological tendency: there is a universal inclination to hurry up to a summit, but once the top is reached one may linger in the descent. This is shown linguistically within each syllable: consonants before the summit of sonority (which in most cases is a vowel) are nearly always short, while consonants after the summit are very often long; cp. thus the two *n*’s of *nun*, the two *r*’s of *tot*, the two *m*’s of *member*. Words of the type 43 with long second syllable are frequent: *football*, *folklore*, *cornfield*, *therefore*, while corresponding words with 34 are rare: they tend to become 24 or even 14



*throughout, therein, austere, naïve, Louise, forgive*—with more or less distinct shortening of the vowel.

In this connexion it is perhaps also worth calling attention to the following fact. As a stressed syllable tends, other things being equal, to be pronounced with higher pitch than weak syllables, a purely "iambic" line will tend towards a higher tone at the end, but according to general phonetic laws this is a sign that something more is to be expected. Consequently it is in iambic verses easy to knit line to line in natural continuation.<sup>1</sup> Inversely the typical pitch movement of a "trochaic" line is towards a descent, which in each line acts as an indication of finality, of finish. If a continuation is wanted, the poet is therefore often obliged to repeat something—a feature which is highly characteristic of such a poem as *Hiawatha*, where each page offers examples like the following:

*Should you ask me, whence these stories?*  
*Whence these legends and traditions,*  
*With the odours of the forest,*  
*With the dew and damp of meadows,*  
*With the curling smoke of wigwams,*  
*With the rushing of great rivers,*  
*With their frequent repetitions, (N.B.)*  
*And their wild reverberations,*  
*As of thunder in the mountains?*  
*I should answer, I should tell you,*  
*From the ... etc. (From the 6 times.)*  
*Should you ask where Nawadaha*  
*Found these songs, so wild and wayward,*  
*Found these legends and traditions,*  
*I should answer, I should tell you*  
*In the ... (In the 4 times) ...*<sup>2</sup>

These, then, seem to be the distinctive features of the two types of metre: rapidity, ease of going on from line to line without a break

<sup>1</sup> Two rimed lines in succession will, however, produce the impression of finish—a feature that is often found in the Elizabethan drama, more particularly when a scene or a speech ends with a sententious saying

<sup>2</sup> These two things, a trochaic metre and constant repetition, are found together in Finnish popular poetry, which Longfellow imitated.

on the one hand,—and on the other slowness, heaviness, a feeling of finality at the end of each line, hence sometimes fatiguing repetitions. Tennyson utilized this contrast in a masterly way in *The Lady of Shalott*, where the greater part of the poem is rising, but where a falling rhythm winds up the whole in the description of her sad swan-song:

Heard a carol, mournful, holy,  
Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,  
Till her blood was frozen slowly,  
And her eyes were darkened wholly,  
Turned to tower'd Camelot.

References for the lines quoted.

Sh = Shakespeare. The titles of plays indicated as in A. Schmidt's Shakespeare-Lexicon. Numbers of act, scene, and line as in the Globe edition.

PL = Milton's *Paradise Lost*, as in Beeching's reprint of the original edition of 1667.

Ø = Øhlenschläger, *Axel og Valborg*, number of page according to A. Boysen's edition of *Poetiske skrifter i udvalg*, III. 1896.

P-M = Paludan-Müller, *Adam Homo*. Anden deel. 1849.

H = Hertz, *Kong Renés datter*. 7de opl. 1893.

G = Goethe, *Iphigene auf Tauris*. Number of act and line according to *Sämtliche werke* XI in Cotta's Bibl. d. weltlitt.

§ 1. 1. Tro. I. 1. 54. — 2, 3. Hml. I. 3. 68, 69. — 4. G I. 115. — 5. G I. 226.

§ 2. 1. Mcb. V. 5. 27. — 2. R3 I. 3. 185. — 3. G I. 27.

§ 5. 1 As II. 3. 63. — 2. Mids. I. 1. 134. — 3. Hml. I. 2. 129. — 4. Lr. III. 7. 31. — 5. Wordsw. Tint. Abb. — 6. Tennyson, En. Arden 5. — 7. G III. 317.

§ 6. 1. Lr. V. 3. 260.

§ 9. 1. Tro. I. 1. 54. — 2. Pope.

§ 10. 1. Mids. I. 1. 134. — 2. Hml. I. 4. 2. — 3. Pope Ess. Crit. 347. — 4. Tennyson Ulysses. — 5. Pope. — 6. Rom. III. 5. 178. — 7. PL II. 621. — 8. The Ring and the Book I. 6.

§ 11. 1. R3 II. 2. 17.

§ 12. 1. P-M 21. — 2. Ø 8. — 3. Ø 23. — 4. G I. 329. — 5. G I. 483. — 6. G III. 242. — 7. Cæs. I. 2. 193. — 8. R3 I. 1. 9. — 9. ib. II. 1. 82.

§ 13. 1. H4A IV. 1. 134. — 2. ib. IV. 3. 31. — 3. ib. V. 2. 68. — 4. As I. 3. 129. — 5. R3 I. 3. 295. — 6. PL IX. 273. — 7. ib. IX. 403. — 8. Ø 7. — 9. Ø 21.

§ 14. 1. R3 I. 3. 274. — 2. ib. I. 3. 209. — 3. ib. I. 3. 255. — 4. ib. II. 2. 17. — 5. ib. II. 1. 62. — 6. Ø 17. — 7. H 95. — 8. Ø. Hakon Jarl. — 9. G I. 106. — 10. G III. 71. — 11. R3 I. 2. 245. — 12. Cæs.

III. 2. 78 — 13. R3 I. 3. 164. — 14. P-M 40. — 15. G I. 332.

§ 15. 1. R3 I. 3. 204. — 2. John III. 4. 93. — 3. R3 II. 1. 138. — 4. ib. II. 2. 81. — 5. As II. 1. 12. — 6. ib. I. 3. 121. — 7. ib. II. 1. 39. — 8. P-M 12. — 9. O 27. — 10. G I. 93. — 11. G I. 351. — 12. R3 I. 3. 272. — 13. O 8. — 14. G I. 463.

§ 16. 1. R3 I. 1. 161. — 2. ib. I. 2. 148. — 3. ib. I. 2. 149. — 4. ib. I. 3. 185. — 5. O 15. — 6. O 8.

§ 18. 1. Wint. III. 1. 10.

§ 19. 1. Mids. I. 1. 5. — 2. John V 7. 113. — 3. Mids. III. 2. 20. — 4. R3 I. 2. 177. — 5. The Ring and the Book I. 14. — 6. ib. I. 47. — 7. ib. I. 608—9.

§ 21. 1. PL VIII. 499. — 2. As II. 1. 36. — 3. Tw. II. 4. 16. — 4. ib. II. 4. 46 — 5. R3 I. 1. 4. — 6. ib. I. 1. 72. — 7. ib. II. 2. 97. — 8. Merch. I 3. 48. — 9. ib. I. 3. 73. — 10. ib. IV. 1. 177. — 11. Shelley Prom. I. 659. — 12. Mids. II. 1. 94 — 13. Merch. II. 9. 59.

§ 22. Hml V. 2. 352 — ib. IV. 7. 80.

§ 23. 1. Lr V. 3. 317. — 2. Rom III. 5. 178. — 3. R3 III. 4. 11.

## POSTSCRIPT

During the more than thirty years since this paper was first written, I have read many books and papers on metre, but have found nothing to shake my belief in the essential truth of my views, though I have often had occasion to regret that I wrote my paper in Danish and buried it in a place where fellow metrists in other countries were not likely to discover it.

If E. A. Sonnenschein had been alive, I should probably have written some pages in refutation of much in his book "What is Rhythm?" (Oxford 1925). Now I shall content myself with pointing out how his inclination to find classical metres in English and to attach decisive importance to quantity leads him to such unnatural scannings of perfectly regular lines as

The véry spírit of Plantágenèt

| ~ ~ ~ | ^ ~ ~ | ^ o | ^ - | ~ ~ ~ |

The first foot is an iambus, but as such should contain a long syllable; now both *e* and *r* in *véry* are known to Sonnenschein as short; he therefore takes *y* as part of a trisyllabic foot, but it must at the same time be the "fall" of the next foot (his mark for the "protraction" which makes this possible is ^); the second iambus

again has as its "rise" the two short syllables *spirit*, of which the second again is protracted to form the "fall" of the third foot; but *of* "does not fill up the time of the rise completely, unless it receives a metrical ictus, which would be accompanied by lengthening"—this is marked *o*. In a similar way are treated

O píty, píty, géntle héaven, píty!  
 | — — — | ^ — — | ^ — | — — — | ^ — — | ^  
 and the shorter

Apollo's summer look

| — — — : — — — | ^ — | (P. 158—9).

We get rid of all such pieces of artificiality by simply admitting that short syllables like *ver-*, *spir-*, *pit-*, *-pol-*, *sum-* are just as susceptible of verse ictus as long ones.

Unfortunately experimental phonetics gives us very little help in these matters. Sonnenschein and others have used the kymograph for metric purposes, and "the kymograph cannot lie" (Sonn. 33): but neither can it tell us anything of what really matters, namely stress, however good it is for length of sounds. The experimentalist Panconcelli-Calzia even goes so far as to deny the reality of syllables, and Scripture finds in his instruments nothing corresponding to the five beats of a blank verse line. So I am afraid poets and metrists must go on depending on their ears only.

English prosodists are apt to forget that the number of syllables is often subject to reduction in cases like *general*, *murderous*, *separately*, *desperate*. compare the treatment of *garden* — *er*, of *person* + *-al* and of *noble* + *ly* as disyllabic *gardener*, *personal*, *nobly*, and the change of syllabic *i* before another vowel to non-syllabic [j] as in *Bohemia*, *cordial*, *immediate*, *opinion*, etc., in which Shakespeare and others have sometimes a full vowel, sometimes syllable reduction, the former chiefly at the end of a line, where it is perfectly natural to slow down the speed of pronunciation. Compare the two lines (Ro II. 2. 4 and 7) in which *envious* is first two and then three syllables:

Arise faire Sun and kill the envious Moone .  
 Be not her maid since she is envious.

Similarly *many a*, *many and*, *worthy a*, *merry as*, etc., occur in Shakespeare and later poets as two syllables in conformity with a natural everyday pronunciation (my *Mod. E. Gr.* I 278).

I must finally remark that the whole of my paper concerns one type of (modern) metre only, and that there are other types, based wholly or partially on other principles, thus classical Greek and Latin verse. On medieval and to some extent modern versification of a different type much light is shed in various papers by William Ellery Leonard (himself a poet as well as a metrist): "Beowulf and the Nibelungen Couplet"; "The Scansion of Middle English Alliterative Verse" (Both in *University of Wisconsin Studies in Language and Literature*, 1918 and 1920), "The Recovery of the Metre of the Cid" (PMLA 1931) and "Four Footnotes to Papers on Germanic Metrics" (in *Studies in Honor of F. Klæber*, 1929).

— *Linguistica*, 1933.

## A MARGINAL NOTE ON SHAKESPEARE'S LANGUAGE AND A TEXTUAL CRUX IN 'KING LEAR'<sup>1</sup>

NOTHING could well be more wide of the mark than Tolstoy's assertion that Shakespeare lacks the true dramatist's power to make different characters speak differently. On the contrary, it would be difficult to find another dramatist using individual style and individual language for the purpose of characterizing different persons to the same extent as Shakespeare. Hotspur does not speak like Prince Hal, nor Rosalind like Viola or Cordelia; Shylock has a language all his own, and the insincerity of the King in *Hamlet* is shown characteristically by a certain tendency towards involved sentences and avoiding the natural and straightforward expression. Even minor characters are often individualized by means of their speech, thus the gardeners in *Richard the Second* (Act III, Sc. iv) or Osric in *Hamlet*. But this has not always been noticed by commentators and editors, and I think a truer appreciation of Shakespeare's art in this respect will assist us in explaining at least one crux in his text.

I am specially alluding to one passage in *King Lear* (IV. 3. 19 ff.), where the first Quarto reads—the whole scene is omitted in the Folio—

Patience and sorrow strove,  
Who should expresse her goodliest[.] You haue seene,  
20 Sun shine and raine at once, her smiles and teares,  
Were like a better way those happie smilets,  
That playd on her ripe lip seeme[d] not to know,

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<sup>1</sup> *A Book of Homage to Shakespeare*, ed. by Israel Gollancz. Oxford 1916, p. 481—483.

What guests were in her eyes which parted thence,  
As pearles from diamonds dropt[.] In briefe,  
Sorrow would be a raritie most beloued,  
If all could so become it.

I have here only changed *streme* into the obvious *strove*, and *seeme* into *seemed*, besides putting full stops after *goodliest* and *dropt*.

Lines 20—1 are difficult. 'It is not clear what sense can be made of it' (W. A. Wright). 'It is doubtful if any meaning can be got out of these words' (W. J. Craig). Those editors who are adverse to violent changes generally follow Boaden and Singer in taking *like* to mean 'like sunshine and rain' and explaining *a better way* adverbially as equal to 'but in a better way as being more beautiful', after which they put a semicolon. But certainly this is very unnatural. Therefore a great many people have thought the text corrupt, and the Cambridge edition particularizes how the imagination of emendators has run riot. A few would change *like* and read

Were link'd a better way,  
or Were link'd in bright array

Others retain *like*, and then set about discovering what her smiles and tears may have been like. Only one letter needs to be changed in order to produce the readings:

Were like a better day;  
Were like a better May—

but then *better* is not very good; why not, therefore, go on changing:

Were like a bitter May,—  
or Were like a wetter May.

No doubt, this last conjecture (Theobald's) is highly ingenious; only it may be objected that the description does not suit the traditional notions concerning the climate of the month of May; hence, obviously, Heath suggests:

Were like an April day

Other conjectures are:

Were like a chequer'd day;  
 Were like a bridal day;  
 Were like a bettering day;

but the inventor of the last emendation is honest enough to say: 'But this is no more satisfactory than the rest of the guesses' (W. J. Craig).

Now, to my mind, the *prōton pseudos* of all these random shots is due to our emendators' attempts to make the passage into natural English and good common sense without noticing who the speaker is and what would be in keeping with his mental attitude. But it so happens that although the speaker is merely a nameless 'Gentleman', whom we meet with in two small and insignificant scenes only (Act III, Sc. i, and here), yet we see what kind of man he is: a courtier, second cousin to Osric, and like him, fond of an affectedly refined style of expression. It is impossible for him to speak plainly and naturally; he is constantly looking out for new similes and delighting in unexpected words and phrases. The number of similes and comparisons is relatively very small in *King Lear*; the iniquities and cruelties of life seem at that period to have made Shakespeare forget the fondness of his youth for verbal refinement and a smooth versification; his style has become unequal and his verse uneven, and the play is powerful by virtue of its very ruggedness. In the middle of the play however—in a subordinate part, so unimportant for the action of the play that some of the finest things of Act III. Sc. i and the whole of Act IV. Sc. iii can be left out of the play (see the Folio)—Shakespeare introduces a gentleman, who is above all a stylist, as the reader of these two scenes will easily notice. Note also especially his words 'in brief'.

This, then, is the way in which I should read the passage in question, changing only the punctuation:

You have seen  
 Sunshine and rain at once; her smiles and tears  
 Were like —

[pronounced in a rising tone, and with a small pause after *like*: he is trying to find a beautiful comparison, but does not succeed to his



own satisfaction, and therefore says to himself, 'No, I will put it differently.']

— a better way:

['I have now found the best way beautifully to paint in words what I saw in Cordelia's face.']

                                  those happy smilets  
That play'd on her ripe lip seem'd not to know  
What guests were in her eyes.

— *Linguistica*, 1933.

## THE HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE CONSIDERED IN ITS RELATION TO OTHER SUBJECTS

No single human individual ever lived completely isolated from his fellow beings; no nation was ever entirely cut off from other nations; and no contact between individuals and nations ever took place without leaving traces in their coming lives. Language is inconceivable without such contact, and nothing is more contagious than modes of speech. From the manner in which a man talks, one can always tell what sort of people he has had most intercourse with and what sort of influences, intellectual and moral, he has been chiefly subject to in the whole of his life. This is true of nations too; a complete survey of the English language would, therefore, show to the initiated the whole of the life of the English nation from the oldest times till the present day.

Let us for a moment imagine that all human records, all books, documents, inscriptions, letters, etc., were lost, with the single exception of a number of texts written in English at various dates, and let us imagine a body of men buckling down to the task of writing the history of the English language with that material only. They would be able, of course, to find out a great many things, but however highly gifted we imagine them to be, there would always remain to them an immense number of riddles which no amount of sagacity would enable them to solve, and which now, to us, are no riddles at all. In the old texts they would encounter a great many words whose meanings could be gathered with more or less certainty from the context; but a vast number of other words would remain unintellig-

ible to them, which are now made perfectly clear to us by their similarity with words in cognate languages. How much should we understand now of *Beowulf*, if we had not Gothic, German, Norse, etc., to compare the words with? And then the forms of the words, their inflections and modifications: our supposed philologists would be at a loss to explain such phenomena as vowel-mutation (umlaut) or to understand the use and formation of the different cases, etc. Similarly, when they saw a great many of the old words disappear and give way to others that were hitherto totally unknown, they would not be in possession of the key we now have in Scandinavian, in French, in Latin and Greek: much of what is now self-evident would under these circumstances strike everybody with amazement, as falling down from heaven without any apparent reason.

A scientific treatment of the English language must, then, presuppose the scientific treatment of a great many other languages as well, and the linguistic historian cannot possibly fulfill his task without a wide outlook to other fields. Not only must he have some acquaintance with the cognate languages, the Arian (or Indo-European) family and more especially the Germanic (or Teutonic) branch of it, but the English have in course of time come into contact with so many other nations and have been so willing to learn foreign words from people of every clime, that it is hardly an exaggeration to say that whoever would really and thoroughly fathom the English language would have to study half the languages spoken on the earth.

More than to any other branch of science the investigators of English are indebted to Arian and Germanic philology. They have continually to consult such works as Brugmann's and Delbrück's *Vergleichende Grammatik und Syntax*, Streitberg's *Urgermanische Grammatik*, Kluge's, Uhlenbeck's, and Franck's etymological dictionaries, not to mention the other dictionaries of German, Dutch, etc., in which etymology plays only a subordinate part; further periodicals like *Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur*, *Journal of Germanic Philology*, *Indogermanische Forschungen*, Kuhn's *Zeitschrift*, — it would be an easy thing to lengthen the list. In classes of Old English recourse must continually be had to Verner's law in order to explain the relation between *wæs* (Mod. E. *was*) and *wæron* (Mod. *were*), or between *risan* (Mod. *rise*) and *ræran* (Mod. *rear*). To understand the rudimentary passive in *hatte* ("is called," cf. Spenser's *hight*), we must go to Gothic, Sanskrit, and Greek, as indeed we must to comprehend the whole of the inflectional system. The force of the prefix *gi-* in *gehieran*, *gewinnan*, *gedon*, and innumerable other verbs is made intelligible by a reference to Latin *con-* in *conficio*, etc., and to the different tense aspects (*aktionsarten*) of Slavonic and other cognate languages. All this is too obvious to call for further comment or illustration.

I must, however, mention here especially one language of paramount importance for the study of Oldest English, namely Frisian. The Frisians were the neighbors on the Continent of the tribes that invaded Britannia; so much the more must we regret that no very old monuments exist to show us the state of the Frisian language at the time of the invasion or shortly afterwards. But even those monuments we have, from the thirteenth century on, have not been studied by philologists with the care we might expect, considering their importance for the history of English. In fact, Frisian has been the stepchild among Germanic tongues. Now, however, this seems to be in a fair way of becoming otherwise, and Anglists — to borrow that very convenient name for “students of English” — should heartily welcome the endeavors of Dr. Wilhelm Heuser, who has in a very handy little volume made the Old Frisian language readily accessible to everybody, and who has there and elsewhere called attention to some very important conclusions that can be drawn from Frisian phonology with regard to Old English dialects.<sup>1</sup> It is to be hoped that this line of research will in future receive all the attention it deserves.

As already hinted above, English philology has to deal very largely with loan-words from various sources. Celtic philology, however, is not so important to the Anglist as might appear likely at first, because there are really very few Celtic words in English, a fact which is easily accounted for by the theory of speech-mixtures put forward lately by the eminent Celtologist Windisch.<sup>2</sup> This question is largely mixed up with another question which has been much discussed of late years, namely, what language did the Angles and Saxons find generally spoken on their arrival in England? Had Latin supplanted Celtic, totally or partially? This, however, need not occupy us long here, as it really falls outside of the history of English proper.<sup>3</sup>

In whatever direction it may be finally settled, the fact remains that Latin loan-words are extremely numerous and important in the English language. All educated people are well acquainted with those innumerable scientific, technical, and other Latin words which have been adopted during the last five centuries and which have stamped the English vocabulary in so peculiar a way. But this class of words, together with the Greek words, which are inseparable from them, offer no serious difficulties to the philologist. They are book-words, taken over through the medium of writing in the form corresponding with that of the golden age of classical literature, and

<sup>1</sup> Wilhelm Heuser, *Altfriesisches Lesebuch*. Heidelberg, 1903. — *Indo-germanische Forschungen*, Anzeiger XIV, p. 29.

<sup>2</sup> E. Windisch, *Zur theorie der mischsprachen und lehnwörter. Berichte über die verhandlungen der sächs. gesellschaft der wissenschaften*, XLIX (1897), p. 101 ff.

<sup>3</sup> A. Pogatscher, *Zur lautlehre der griechischen, lateinischen und romanischen lehnwörter im Altenglischen*. Strassburg, 1888. — J. Loth, *Les mots latins dans les langues brittoniques*. Paris, 1892. — Pogatscher, *Angelsachsen und Romanen, Englische Studien*, XIX (1894), p. 329 ff.

only a minority of them have in English cast off the literary imprint.

Much more philological interest is attached to the older strata of Latin loan-words, the oldest of which were adopted before the Angles and Saxons left the Continent. Here we have to do with an oral influence, and the forms of these words therefore reflect the pronunciation of the Latin-speaking communities with which the various Germanic tribes came into contact. The deviations from the classical forms found in the English shapes of these early loans must therefore be due partly to changes in the language from which they were borrowed, partly to the subsequent alterations they have undergone in the borrowing language. Rightly interpreted, they consequently shed light on the development of Latin into Romance as well as on that of Germanic into English, and inversely, in order to be rightly interpreted, they require familiarity with both languages on the part of the investigator. As contemporary monuments are totally wanting, at any rate for the borrowing language, the subject is extremely difficult of treatment; but most of the phonological difficulties have been surmounted in an important work by A. Pogatscher.<sup>1</sup> The cultural side of these early loans as well as of the somewhat younger loans due chiefly to the conversion to Christianity has been treated of by Kluge and others, especially MacGillivray.<sup>2</sup>

The Danish and Norwegian vikings and especially those Scandinavians who settled in England for good, left a deeper mark on the English language than is very often supposed. It is evident, therefore, that the student of English should not neglect the Scandinavian languages, the less so as their close relationship with English and the early development in them of a literary style enable the scholar to clear up a great many points in English, even apart from those points where the protracted contact between the two nations has left its marks on either nation's language and civilization generally. Hitherto it has chiefly been Scandinavian scholars who have grappled with the numerous problems connected with this contact. The Dane Johannes Steenstrup has traced much of juridical importance back to Scandinavian institutions, his chief criterion being the loan-word test.<sup>3</sup> The Swede Erik Brate gave us the first account of the fates of Scandinavian sounds in Early Middle English,<sup>4</sup> and lately his countryman Erik Björkman has given us a very full and extremely

<sup>1</sup> Pogatscher, *Zur lautlehre der griechischen, etc., lehnworte im Altenglischen*. Strassburg, 1888.

<sup>2</sup> F. Kluge, in Paul's *Grundriss der germanischen philologie*, I, 2d ed. Strassburg, 1899. — MacGillivray, *The Influence of Christianity on the Vocabulary of Old English*. Halle, 1902.

<sup>3</sup> Joh. Steenstrup, *Danelag. Normannerne*, vol. IV. Copenhagen, 1882.

<sup>4</sup> Erik Brate, *Nordische lehnwörter im Ormmulum*. Paul und Braune's *Beiträge zur geschichte der deutschen sprache*, X (1884).

able treatment of the whole of the subject, in which both lexical and phonological points of view are done full justice to.<sup>1</sup>

The Scandinavians had scarcely had time to establish themselves, still less to complete their social and linguistic fusion with the native race, when the Norman Conquest brought in another element, which was to play a still greater part in the development of English life and English language—at any rate as far as outward appearance is concerned, for if we were able to look beneath the surface and to take everything into consideration, it is not improbable that the Scandinavian influence would turn out to be the more important one of the two. As it is, French loan-words are more conspicuous than Scandinavian ones, just as the political revolution brought about by the Conquest is more in view than the subtler modifications of the social structure that may be due to the Danes and Norwegians. Among the historians who have written of the Conquest and its consequences and who have incidentally paid attention to linguistic facts and unearthed documents illustrative of the conflict of languages, Freeman deserves of course the foremost place, although he is perhaps a little apt to underrate the rôle played by French. Some of his assertions have been put right in Johan Vising's excellent survey of the history of the French language in England.<sup>2</sup>

As for the French loan-words themselves, more attention has been paid by English scholars to their place in the economy of the language, their intellectual power or emotional value as compared with the native synonyms, than to the relation to their French originals, although that side too offers no small interest. Their phonology is rather complicated on account of their coming from various dialects and being taken over at various dates, so that sometimes the same French word appears in English in two widely different forms, for instance *catch* and *chase*. The first scholar who treated French loans in English from this point of view with perfect knowledge of French as well as of English sound-history was Henry Nichol, whose article on the French language in the ninth edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* gives much attention to English and is still well worth reading. Since then, the question has been treated in various places by that indefatigable veteran worker in all branches of English etymology, Walter William Skeat,<sup>3</sup> and in Germany by Dietrich Behrens.<sup>4</sup>

With regard to the other languages, from which English has borrowed freely at various times, Dutch, Italian, Spanish, etc., it is

<sup>1</sup> Erik Björkman, *Scandinavian Loan-Words in Middle English*, 1-II. Halle, 1900-1902.

<sup>2</sup> Johan Vising, *Franska språket i England*, 1-III. Göteborg, 1900-1902.

<sup>3</sup> W. W. Skeat, *Principles of English Etymology*. Second series. Oxford, 1891. — *Notes on English Etymology*. Oxford, 1901.

<sup>4</sup> Dietrich Behrens, *Beiträge zur geschichte der französischen sprache in England*. (*Französische Studien*, v, Band 2. heft.) Heilbronn, 1886. — *Französische elemente im Englischen*, in Paul's *Grundriss*, as above.

to be regretted that no specialists have made these several influences subjects of monographs, as the very able chapters devoted to them in Skeat's *Principles of English Etymology* cannot be said to have exhausted the subject.

I have spoken hitherto of the direct use obtainable from the study of other languages for the history of English. But it is clear that indirectly, too, the scientific study of any subject, and more especially the scientific study of any language, may be of value for the student of English. The wider his outlook and the greater the number of languages he is able to compare with English, the more light will he be able to throw on his special study. His ideas ought not to be narrowed down to one particular type of linguistic structure. A broad horizon is the more necessary because the development of the English idiom has in a great many respects diverged very widely from the structural type characteristic of the older languages of the same family. The grammarian should be on his guard against applying indiscriminately the same categories and the same points of view to all languages, for no language can be rightly measured by the yard of any other language. This, however, is just what has been done to a very great extent, not only with regard to English, but more or less in describing and in judging all languages. Latin grammar was studied earlier than, and more extensively than, any other grammar; Latin was considered *the* language, and any deviation in other languages from its rules was considered a deterioration. Even if this manner of looking at things grammatical has now been largely superseded, because an ever-increasing number of different languages have been scientifically investigated, there still remain not a few survivals of the Latin superstition, which it will be the work of future grammarians to root out completely. Grammatical terminology is still in the main based on Latin grammar. The student of English will find in his grammatical vocabulary expressions for whatever English has in common with Latin, but those grammatical categories and phenomena which are not found in Latin have either no names at all or else each author has his own names. The combination found in "he is reading" is by some called simply the periphrastic conjugation, by others the progressive form, or the present continuous, or the descriptive present, or the definite present. Now, of course, names are not everything, and we may have very definite notions without definite names, or, at any rate, without definite names accepted by everybody. Still, the want of a fixed technical nomenclature is decidedly a drawback.

But there is another, and much more serious, drawback derived from the preponderance of Latin grammar. It is, in fact, a very difficult thing for anybody that has been from his earliest youth thoroughly drilled in that particular set of grammatical ideas, to

liberate his mind from their vitiating influence when dealing with another language. His grammatical vision is too apt to be colored by the Latin spectacles he has worn so long. He will look in English for the same cases, the same tenses and moods as he is familiar with in Latin, and it is surprising how often he finds them in places where a man coming fresh to a grammatical investigation of English without a previous training in Latin would probably have described the actual phenomena in a totally different manner. I open one of the best-known English grammars and find the following statement, namely, "The name of Cases is given to different forms which a noun (or pronoun) assumes to denote its relations to other words in a sentence. Five Cases may be distinguished in English, the Nominative, Objective, Dative, Possessive, Vocative." The author does not appear to have seen his own want of logic in making *form* the distinguishing feature of cases and yet establishing five cases in English, for in a note he goes on to add, quite unconcernedly, that "with the exception of the Possessive all these have long since lost their characteristic endings, but the use of the Case-names serves to mark the relations formerly indicated by them." In the grammar I quote, as well as in some other modern ones, such distinctions are referred not to Latin, but to Old English, but I think I am right when maintaining that they are really made in deference to Latin syntax rather than to Old English, as shown by the inclusion of the vocative on the one hand and by the exclusion of the instrumental on the other. Such grammars also classify as accusatives of description or of time, space, measure, or manner, a great many instances where Old English and other cognate languages have the dative or some other case. We should accustom ourselves in dealing with such questions to take each language, and each stage of each language — Modern English for instance — entirely on its own merits and look the real facts in the face, without any regard to how other languages express the same meanings. In a very able book on the absolute participle in English, the author says that it is right to parse the so-called nominative absolute as "a dative absolute in disguise." Now this amounts to very much the same thing as saying that a locomotive is a horse in disguise or — to remain within the sphere of language — to say that in "he likes pears" *he* is a dative in disguise, *likes* a plural in disguise, and *pears* the subject in disguise, because in Old English the sentence would run "him liciaþ peran." It is unhistorical to treat Modern English as Latin or Old English or any other language in disguise.

It is often urged that we should in English distinguish a dative from an accusative on the strength of meaning only, but then we might with equal right say that the adjective is in three different cases in the sentences "my father is old; my father has grown old;



my father is sick," for there is really a logical foundation for the distinction made here by Finnish: *isäni on vanha* (nominative); *isäni on jo tullut vanhaksi* (translative, indicating the state into which any one or anything passes); *isäni on sairaana* (essive, indicating the state in which anybody or anything is). The distinction is a real one in Finnish, because it is shown externally; but it is not a real one in English. In the same manner we should be justified in speaking of a dative case in English, if it had either a distinct form or manifested itself outwardly in some other manner, for example, by a fixed position. If the dative preceded invariably the accusative, we might recognize a positional dative, but it does not. In "I gave it him" there is nothing grammatical to show us which of the two words is the indirect object. It is true that when the direct object is a noun (not a pronoun) the indirect object is always placed before the direct object; but that is not enough to establish a separate case, unless, indeed, we should be willing to apply the same designation of "dative case" to all the nouns placed first in each one of the following sentences:

I told the boy some stories.  
 I asked the boy a few questions.  
 I heard the boy his lessons.  
 I took the boy long walks.  
 I kissed the boy good-night.  
 [I painted the wall a different color.]  
 I called the boy bad names.  
 I called the boy a scoundrel.<sup>1</sup>

If we are to speak of separate datives and accusatives in English, I for one do not know where in this list the dative goes out and the accusative comes in. (Note that in the second sentence Old English would have had two accusatives.) In the same manner I think it perfectly idle to inquire what case is employed in "he was tied *hand and foot*," "they were now *face to face*," "we shall go down *Harrow way this day week*," "I saw a man the *age* of my grandmother," etc. We have here various employments of the "kernel" or "crude form" of a noun, and nothing else. It is even more wrong to speak of phrases with *to* and *of* as datives and genitives, as is done, for instance, in articles on "Die Trennung eines Genitivs von seinem regierenden Worte durch andere Satztheile." What is meant is the order of two prepositional (or adverbial) adjuncts, as in "the arrival at Cowes of the German Emperor." *Of the Emperor* is no more a genitive than *at Cowes* is an accusative or *from Cowes* an ablative. Whoever takes an interest in the purification of English grammar from such sham classifications as I have here instanced, will find great help in an

<sup>1</sup> Some of these combinations may not be very frequent, but they all occur and all have to be analyzed.

excellent book by H. G. Wiwel,<sup>1</sup> in which the same kind of work has been done with regard to Danish and in which the growth of the traditional grammatical system is, moreover, elucidated in a masterly manner. As Danish resembles English more than any other language in grammatical structure we have here another instance of a research in one language being useful to students of a cognate tongue. But it should not be forgotten that in England one of the foremost scholars of our day has done excellent work in this respect, for Henry Sweet's ingenious essay *Words, Logic, and Grammar* of 1873<sup>2</sup> really not only anticipates such works as Wiwel's, but on some points even goes further in doing away radically with traditional notions and grammatical prejudices.

The exaggerated importance attached to Latin is also injurious to the study of English if it causes forms and constructions to be *valued* according to a Latin standard. Some authors, Milton and Dryden among them, have impaired their English prose by thinking too much of Latin syntax instead of trusting to their natural linguistic instinct, and similarly some grammarians are apt to despise such English idioms as are contrary to Latin rules. The omission of relative pronouns, a preposition placed at the end of a question or of a relative clause, the passive construction with a so-called dative turned into the subject, all these eminently English idioms have not been valued according to their merits. That the ordinary schoolmaster should persecute these things is perhaps only what might be expected so long as a rational course of modern linguistic science as applied to English does not enter into the ordinary school curriculum, but what concerns us more here is that the same underrating of a great number of pithy and expressive constructions is found even in works dealing with historical English grammar. In the same manner, instead of examining impartially the rise and spreading of the past indicative in conditional clauses ("if he was caught, he would be punished") and after such a verb as *wish* ("I wish he was dead"), many grammarians dispose of the use by simply branding it as careless or slipshod English, precluding themselves from the correct point of view by considering *came* in "if he came" as necessarily subjunctive. If people would not blink the fact that in modern English "if he came" and "if we were" and "if I do" and a thousand other sentences are no longer either in the indicative or in the subjunctive, they would see how natural it is that the indicative should come to be used in the comparatively very rare instances in which the indicative and subjunctive forms are still distinct, and then we should, probably, soon see an investigation, which is now nowhere found, of the ques-

<sup>1</sup> H. G. Wiwel, *Synspunkter for dansk sproglære*. Copenhagen, 1901.

<sup>2</sup> Henry Sweet, *Words, Logic, and Grammar*, in *Transactions of the Philological Society*. London, 1873.

tion, where does unsophisticated usage retain the subjunctive and where is the indicative employed naturally by everybody in England and America?

This leads up to another consideration. Up to quite recent times, the history of any language was chiefly studied through the means of written literature. But now it is more and more recognized that, indispensable as are written documents for the study of the older periods, they can never give everything, and that they will remain dead until vivified by the help of the study of the language as actually spoken nowadays by living men, women, and children. The study of language should always begin, like charity, at home; everybody should be trained in the investigation of his own, his family's, and his friend's every-day speech, before going on to deal with dead languages — and I take here the word "dead" in its strictest sense, including the language of Carlyle and of Emerson just as well as that of Chaucer or of Cynewulf, for they are all accessible to us through written and printed books only. The tendency towards a living language-study is strong everywhere, and the student of English should keep thoroughly abreast of the best work done in that direction with regard to other languages. German, French, Scandinavian, and so on. This is true of all branches of philology, not only of phonetics, where it has been recognized by everybody in theory if not always in practice, but also of such branches as syntax and semantics, where there is now in many countries a growing tendency to take as a basis the observation of the actually spoken language.

The study of other languages will assist the Anglist in more ways than those enumerated hitherto. Let me finish this lecture by drawing attention to one of the most fundamental problems in the evolution of language. English is characterized by its large admixture of foreign words, and the history of the English-speaking race is in a large measure the history of its mixture with alien races. Now, English has gone farther than most cognate languages in simplifying its hereditary flexional system and wearing off most of the old endings. The problem naturally arises: what is the relation, or is there any relation, between these two things, race- or speech-mixture and simplification of structure?

The general assumption seems to be that foreign influence is the cause of that simplification, and this assumption is always stated in a purely dogmatic manner, no attempt being ever made to prove the assertion. Nor is it possible, so far as I see, either to prove or to disprove it on the strength of English alone, as the direct evidence afforded by contemporary documents is so scarce. The foreign influence to which the breaking down of the old grammatical system is ascribed is nearly always taken to be that due to the Norman

Conquest. But as I have shown elsewhere <sup>1</sup> it is probable that the Scandinavian immigration exercised a much stronger influence on English grammar than the French. Both the mutual relations of the two languages, Scandinavian and English, and the greater rapidity of the structural change in the North, where Scandinavians settled in the greatest number, point decidedly in that direction, if we are to think of foreign influence at all. On the other hand, the chronology of some changes, for instance the early confusion of the old system of genders in some Northern monuments, as well as the gradual manner in which the leveling took place on many points, where we seem able to account phonologically and morphologically for each little step in a development which it took centuries to accomplish — all this makes it not unwarrantable to speak of the whole process as one which would have taken place in the same, or nearly the same manner, even had no foreign mixture entered into play.

As we are thus left unable to answer the question decidedly one way or the other from what we know about English itself, the idea naturally presents itself that an examination of parallel processes in other languages might perhaps assist us materially. For if we find everywhere else in other languages the two things, mixture of speech or of race and simplification of grammatical structure, going together, and if, on the other hand, pure languages are always conservative in their structure, the conclusion apparently is a safe one that the two phenomena are interdependent. The limited time at my disposal, and still more my limited knowledge, prevent me from doing here more than throwing out a few hints.

Among the Germanic languages, Danish is one of the simplest, as far as flexional structure is concerned. — and Danish has undergone a very strong foreign influence, a considerable part of its vocabulary being made up of Low German words. If we compare the different Danish dialects with one another, we see some differences in regard to the degree in which the simplification has been carried out, the dialect of West Jutland going farthest in that respect. There, for instance, the three grammatical genders have been merged together, final *-e* has disappeared, the definite article is one invariable prefixed *æ*, while in other dialects it is postfixed and varies according to number and according to the two or, in other places, three genders still distinguished. Now, there does not seem to be a scrap of evidence to show that this part of the country has witnessed any stronger race-mixture than the others. It is worth noting that in the district nearest to German-speaking communities two genders are preserved. It is my impression that the most simplified dialect has no greater admixture of loan-words than the more conservative ones, and this impression has been endorsed by the greatest authority on Jutland

<sup>1</sup> Otto Jespersen, *Progress in Language*, p. 173. London, 1894.

dialects, the Rev. Dr. H. F. Feilberg. The structural contrast to West Jutlandish among the Scandinavian languages is Icelandic, which has preserved the old endings and inflections with wonderful fidelity; this conservatism is combined with an extremely small number of loan-words, and no race-mixture has ever taken place.

We proceed to South Africa, where we find a language which has perhaps thrown off more of the old flectional complexity than any other Germanic language, English not even excepted, namely Cape Dutch or "Afrikaansch," "de Taal." The total absence of distinction of gender, the dropping of a great many endings, an extremely simple declension and conjugation, which has given up, for instance, any marks of different persons and numbers in the verbs, and other similar traits, distinguish this extremely interesting language from European Dutch. As for loan-words, the number of English words, which is now very considerable, can have nothing to do with the simplification, for the English did not come to the Cape till after the grammatical structure had undergone most of its changes. French loan-words are not so plentiful as might be expected from the number of Huguenots among the original stock of immigrants, but Malayo-Portuguese has contributed quite a considerable number of words. In the latest book on Cape Dutch the simplification is attributed, not to any particular foreign tongue, but to the fact that the language has been largely spoken by people having originally had a different mother tongue, no matter what that tongue was in each individual case.<sup>1</sup>

Among the Romance languages, Roumanian evidently is the one which has undergone the strongest foreign influence; it has a great many loan-words from various sources, and the people also is largely mixed with alien populations. But here, the structure of the language is rather less simple than that of the sister tongues; Roumanian has, for instance, preserved more of the old declension than other Romance languages. Its neighbor, Bulgarian, has in some respects the same position among Slavonic languages as Roumanian among Romance. The same causes have been at work among both populations and have produced race-mixture as well as a large proportion of loan-words from Turkish and other languages. But with regard to simplification, Bulgarian stands on a different footing from Roumanian, as it has given up very much of the old Slavonic complexity; the case-system has nearly disappeared, and prepositions are used very extensively instead of the old endings.

In the Balkans we meet with still another language which has to be considered here, namely, Modern Greek. The extremely artificial form in which this language is written does not concern us here.

<sup>1</sup> H. Meyer, *Die sprache der Buren*. Göttingen, 1901. — Compare also D. C. Hesselning, *Het Afrikaansch*. Leiden, 1899.

as it is an outcome of an entirely unnatural tendency to conceal the history and development of some two thousand years. Spoken Modern Greek presents a combination of the two phenomena, simplification of grammar and a great influx of foreign words.<sup>1</sup> So does Modern Persian too; its accidence is extremely simple and in so many respects resembles English that Misteli consecrates the last sections of his great work to a comparison of the two languages in their present shapes.<sup>2</sup> Persian also in that respect resembles English, that it is full of loan-words, nearly all expressions for philosophical, abstract, and technical ideas being Arabic words. But just as most of the philosophical, abstract, and technical Latin and Greek words were adopted into English after the process of grammatical simplification had been carried very far, in the same manner Arabic influence in Persian follows, instead of preceding, the doing away with most of the old complexity of grammar. Pehlevi, or the language of the Sassanid period, before the Arabic conquest, is far simpler than Old Persian. If, then, the Persian simplicity is a consequence of speech-mixture, it must be one of earlier date, and perhaps the Aramaic influence on Pehlevi is strong enough to account for everything; that, however, must be left for specialists to decide.

In India, the old system of inflections has broken down in the modern languages, which are all more or less analytic in their structure. Hindi seems to have gained much in simplicity as early as the thirteenth century, although the modern system of auxiliary verbs and of postpositions was not then fully established, but the strong influx of Persian (with Arabic and Turkish) words did not begin till some centuries later. Hindustani is practically the same language as Hindi with still more foreignisms in it. Gujarati has preserved more of the old inflections than Hindi, but the Persian elements are rather more numerous here than in Hindi.

We should not leave the Arian (Indo-European) languages without mentioning the numerous varieties of Creole languages that have sprung up in all those parts of the globe where Europeans have been in constant communication with native populations of different races. Grammatical simplicity has in all these languages been carried extremely far, and though the actual admixture of exotic words is very unequal and inconstant, varying as it does, according to circumstances and individuals, still it is always pretty considerable.<sup>3</sup>

Outside the Indo-European languages, the nearest in kin are probably the Finno-Ugrian group. The absence of old documents

<sup>1</sup> See on the relation between the two things especially K. Krumbacher, *Das problem der neugriechischen schriftsprache*. Festrede in der kgl. bayr. akademie der wissenschaften in Munchen. 1902.

<sup>2</sup> F. Misteli, *Charakteristik der hauptsachlichsten typen des sprachbaues*. Berlin, 1893.

<sup>3</sup> See H. Schuchardt, *Kreolische studien*, Wiener akademie, 1883 ff.

makes it a difficult matter to speak of the history of these languages; still, we may say that Esthonian, which has undergone a strong German influence, shows a more worn-down state of the old grammar than Finnish, and that the same is the case with Livonian, which has been so strongly influenced by Lettic that nearly half of the vocabulary is borrowed from that language. As for Magyar, or Hungarian, its vocabulary presents a highly variegated appearance: Persian, Turkish, Slavonic, Latin, and German elements are freely mixed with the original stock. Phonetic development has worn down the forms of the words to a considerable extent, and many of the old grammatical forms have disappeared. The case-endings now used are quite modern developments and are joined to the words in a much looser way and also much more regularly than those of Finnish, for example; in fact, they can hardly be termed anything but postpositions. On the whole its grammatical structure seems to be really simpler than that of the other languages of the same group.<sup>1</sup>

In the Semitic group, Hebrew even in the oldest period known to us is much simpler in its grammatical structure than Arabic. Whether this is due to speech-mixture or not is a question which I must leave to others to decide; but I am told that scholars are now beginning to recognize more and more Assyrian loan-words in Hebrew. Aramaic is still simpler, and here foreign influences seem to be much easier to trace.

Outside the three great families of languages which I have here spoken about, very little is known to me that might serve to clear up our question. Malayan has a very simple grammatical structure and a very great number of foreign words. Chinese is still less complicated in its structure, but is its vocabulary to any great extent made up of loan-words? On the other hand, are the American Indian languages, with their intricacies of grammar, completely free from foreign mixtures? It is surely permissible to entertain some doubt on both of these heads.

I am painfully conscious that what I have been able to do here is only a very imperfect sketch. I dare draw no definite conclusion from the somewhat conflicting evidence I have been able to adduce, but I have thought it might be well to throw out a few suggestions for a future work, which ought certainly to be done by some one possessed of a deeper knowledge of the languages I have mentioned, and, if possible, of all the other languages that might throw light on the subject. This scholar of a, let us hope, not too remote future, I should venture to recommend to pay especial attention to chronology, — for it is not enough to state mixture and simplicity, but it

<sup>1</sup> With regard to the Finno-Ugrian languages, I am largely indebted to the lectures and writings of Vilhelm Thomsen.

must be shown also for each individual case that the latter is subsequent in time to the former, if we are to believe in a cause and effect relation between them. And then he must, wherever possible, distinguish between speech-mixture and race-mixture and determine in each case whether one or the other or both have taken place. He will find some very useful generalizations on the relation between the two kinds of mixture in a paper by the American scholar George Hempl,<sup>1</sup> whom I am happy to quote here at the close of my paper, for it would scarcely be possible to find a more apposite place than America in which to investigate the question I have alluded to. Here in America you have race-mixtures and speech-mixtures of every kind going on and readily accessible to observation every day. Here you see the greatest amalgamation that the world has ever witnessed of human beings into one great nation. The future of the English language is to a great extent in the hands of the Americans. It is gratifying, therefore, to see that the study of its past and of its present is taken up with such zeal and such energy by a great number of extremely able American scholars that we cannot fail to entertain the very best hopes for the future of English philology.

<sup>1</sup> G. Hempl, *Language-Rivalry and Speech-Differentiation in the case of Race-Mixture*. *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, xxix (1898), p. 35.

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# THE CLASSIFICATION OF LANGUAGES

## A CONTRIBUTION TO THE HISTORY OF LINGUISTIC SCIENCE

In numerous books on the science of language we find the following morphological classification of all the languages spoken on the earth:

I. Isolating languages, in which each word is a monosyllable incapable of receiving any formative affix or of undergoing any internal change for grammatical purposes;

II. Agglutinating languages, in which words that are in themselves immutable are capable of receiving formative affixes; the roots and the grammatical affixes are as it were glued together, hence the name;

III. Flexional languages, in which the fusion of root and grammatical element is much more complete, the root itself being now also capable of undergoing internal changes.

As typical examples of these three classes are generally given: I. Chinese, II. Finnish and Turkish, III. languages belonging to our own (the Arian or Indo-European) family of languages, Sanskrit, Greek, etc.

Most of the books giving this division of languages also recognize in the three classes three successive stages in the history of languages: these were originally everywhere isolating, and Chinese and some other languages have remained at this primitive stage, while many more have progressed to the second or agglutinative stage; through this finally a few favoured languages have succeeded in reaching the third or flexional stage, which thus ranks highest in the development of language.

It may be of some interest to trace the way in which this classification of languages gradually developed during the first half of the nineteenth century until it was accepted by nearly everybody.

The first name we here meet with is that of Friedrich von Schlegel. His book *Ueber die Sprache und Weisheit der Indier* (1808) made a great stir and exercised a strong influence, more perhaps on account of its attractive style and the writer's position as one of the chiefs of the Romantic movement than on account of its scientific value. Still Schlegel has the great merit of being the first in Germany to call attention to the importance of the Sanskrit language and of Indian literature and of seeing the affinity of Sanskrit with the best known European languages. On the basis of a rather superficial knowledge of a small part of the languages of the earth he is not afraid of surveying the whole world of human languages, dividing them into two classes, one comprising Sanskrit and its congeners only, and the second all other languages. In the former he finds organic growth of the roots as shown by their capability of inner change, and this inner change is what he terms « flexion ». In the latter class everything is effected by the addition of affixes (prefixes and suffixes). In Greek he admits that it would be possible to believe in the grammatical endings (*bildungssylben*) having arisen from particles and auxiliary words amalgamated with the word itself, but in Sanskrit even the last semblance of this possibility disappears, the structure of the language being formed in a thoroughly organic way through flexion, i. e. inner changes and modifications of the radical sound, and not only mechanically composed through the addition of words and particles.

Now it should be noted that this bipartition of all languages carries in it the germ of a tripartition. On the lowest stage of his second class Schlegel places Chinese, in which, as he acknowledges, the particles denoting secondary sense modifications consist in monosyllables that are completely independent of the word itself. Chinese thus really, though Schlegel himself does not say so, falls outside his affix languages and forms a class by itself. On the other hand his arguments for reckoning Semitic languages (Hebrew, Arabic, etc.) among affix languages are very weak, and he seems also somewhat inclined to say that much in their structure resembles real flexion. If we introduce these two changes into his system, we arrive at the threefold division mentioned above. The first to give it is Schlegel's brother A. W. von Schlegel, who speaks of 1. les langues sans aucune structure grammaticale

— under which misleading term he understands Chinese with its unchangeable monosyllabic words; 2. les langues qui emploient des affixes; 3. les langues à inflexions. He too places flexional languages highest and thinks them alone « organic » (parce qu'elles renferment un principe vivant de développement et d'accroissement, et qu'elles ont seules, si je puis m'exprimer ainsi, une végétation abondante et féconde). On the other hand he subdivides flexional languages into two classes, synthetic and analytic, the latter using personal pronouns and auxiliaries in the conjugation of verbs, prepositions to remedy the want of cases, and adverbs to express the degrees of comparison. While the origin of synthetic languages loses itself in the darkness of ages (se perd dans la nuit des temps), the analytic languages have been created in modern times; all those that we know are due to the decomposition of synthetic languages. These remarks are found in the introduction to *Observations sur la langue et la littérature provençale* (1818) and are thus primarily meant to account for the contrast between synthetic Latin and the analytic Romanic languages.

Franz Bopp, by many reputed the real founder of modern linguistic science, turns against Fr. Schlegel in a chapter on Roots added to the English translation (1820) of his first book. Here he contrasts the structure of Semitic and of our roots; Semitic roots have to contain three consonants, neither less nor more, and thus generally consist of two syllables, while in Sanskrit, Greek, etc., the character of the root « is not to be determined by the number of letters, but by that of the syllables, of which they contain only one »; a root like *i* 'to go' thus would be unthinkable in Arabic. The consequence of this structure of the roots is that the inner changes which play such a large part in expressing grammatical modifications in Semitic languages must be much more restricted in our family of languages. These changes were what Schlegel termed flexions, but Bopp, while holding that both inner changes and the addition of suffixes are used in all languages, Chinese perhaps alone excepted, thinks that the latter method is prevalent in Sanskrit. Bopp speaks with great courtesy of Schlegel in his printed paper, but in a contemporary letter he says that in consequence of his own root theory Schlegel's division of languages into organic and mechanic falls completely to the ground.

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In the following years Bopp more and more saw mechanical forces at work in the shaping of Indo-European forms, also in those vowel changes that affected Sanskrit roots. It is, therefore, quite natural that when in his great *Vergleichende Grammatik* (especially in the second edition, 1857) he gave his own division of languages, it should be the following: (I) Languages without the power of composition, such as Chinese. — (II) Languages with monosyllabic roots, capable of composition and obtaining their grammar nearly exclusively in this way; to this class belong the Indo-European languages, but also all languages not comprised under the first or the third class. — III. Languages with disyllabic roots and three necessary consonants as exclusive bearers of the signification of the word. To this class only the Semitic languages belong; grammatical forms are created not only through composition as in the second class, but also through inner modification of the roots.

It will be seen that Bopp here expressly avoids both terms agglutination and flexion, the former because it had been used of languages contrasted with Indo-European, while Bopp wanted to show the essential identity of the two classes, the latter probably because it had been by Schlegel used in the narrow sense of inner modification. If this terminology were used strictly and consistently we should have to recognize as flexion only such forms as English *drink : drank : drunk*, while German *trinke : trank : ge-trunk-en* and still more Greek *leip-ō : e-lip-on : le-loip-a* would be impure flexion or flexion mixed with agglutination or whatever you would call it. Schlegel's use of that term was therefore silently dropped in all subsequent works, « flexion » being universally used so as to include what is actually found in the grammar of such languages as Sanskrit and Greek, comprising inner and outer modifications, but of course not requiring both at the same time.

It is worthy of notice that neither in the brothers Schlegel nor in Bopp do we yet meet with the idea that the classes established besides being a division of languages as actually found also represent so many stages in historical development; indeed this idea was totally excluded in Bopp's division, at any rate as far as classes II and III were concerned, for no transition would be possible between the two heterogeneous species of roots as there defined. On the other hand Bopp

from the very first was extremely fond of explaining endings in Sanskrit, etc., from added roots that had lost their separate existence and thus gave a mighty impulse to the theory that the whole of the Arian grammatical system had originated in that way.

The next writer with whom we shall have to deal here is that profound thinker Wilhelm von Humboldt. In an important paper of 1822 he explains the origin of grammatical forms in this way. Language at first denotes only objects, leaving it to the hearer to understand or guess at (*hinzudenken*) their connexion. By and by the word order becomes fixed, and some words lose their independent use, and in the second stage we therefore see grammatical relations denoted through word order and through words vacillating between material and formal significations. Gradually these become affixes, but the connexion is not yet firm, the joints are still visible, the result being an aggregate, but not yet a unit. Thus in the third stage we have something analogous to form, but not real form. This is achieved in the fourth stage, where the word is *one*, only modified in its grammatical relations through the flexional sound; each word belongs to one definite part of speech, and the words used to denote form have no longer any disturbing material signification, but are pure expressions of relation.

In Humboldt's posthumous work on the diversity of human speech we continually meet with the terms agglutination and flexion by the side of a new term incorporation. He finds this in full bloom in many American languages, such as Mexican, where the object may be inserted into the verbal form between the element indicating person and the root. Now Humboldt says that besides Chinese, which has no grammatical form, there are three possible forms of languages, the flexional, the agglutinative, and the incorporating, but he has the very important addition that all languages contain one or more of these forms; he therefore tends to deny the existence of any exclusively agglutinative or exclusively flexional language, as both principles are generally mixed together. He looks upon each individual language as one nation's attempt to approach the speech ideal, but flexional forms like Latin *amarit* or Greek *εποίεσας* appear to him as the truly grammatical forms in contradistinction to such combinations of words and

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syllables as are found in cruder languages, because here we have a fusion into one whole, which causes the parts to be forgotten and joins them firmly under one accent.

Between Sanskrit and Chinese as the two opposite poles we may place all the rest of languages, but the languages reckoned as agglutinative have really nothing in common except just that negative trait that they are neither isolating nor flexional, while otherwise they are widely different. The final conclusion drawn by Humboldt therefore is that the structural diversities of human languages are so great that they make one despair of a fully comprehensive classification.

Curiously enough, in spite of these peremptory statements we find that the next two scholars who give a system of classification both claim that they have learned their division from Humboldt — I am referring to Pott and Schleicher.

A. F. Pott has four classes: I. Isolating; II. Agglutinating; III. Flexional; IV. Incorporating. But as he thinks that flexion is really the normal condition of a language, which in the two first classes has not yet been reached, while the fourth class has transgressed it, he tends to establish three classes termed by him I. Infranormal; II. Normal; III. Extranormal. In this Pott seems to have had no followers.

August Schleicher exercised more influence on linguistic science than anybody else in his time; in numerous publications he dealt not only with details, but also with many questions of principle. With regard to the question occupying us here he differs from all his predecessors in so far as he introduces a deductive element, while they were all of them content with classifying the languages they actually found and thus proceeded inductively. From the outset Schleicher was a sworn adherent of Hegel's philosophy, and the introduction to his earliest book (*Sprachvergleichende Untersuchungen*, 1848) is entirely Hegelian. Hegel everywhere moves in trilogies; Schleicher therefore must have three classes and consequently has to tack together the two classes we found in Pott as II and IV; then he is able philosophically to deduce the tripartition. For language consists in *meaning* (bedeutung; matter, contents, root) and *relation* (beziehung; form), tertium non datur. As it would be a sheer impossibility for a language to express form only, we obtain three classes:

I. Here meaning is the only thing indicated by sound;

relation is merely suggested by word-position: isolating languages.

II. Both meaning and relation are expressed by sound, but the formal elements are visibly tacked on to the root which is itself invariable: agglutinating languages.

III. The elements of meaning and of relation are fused together or absorbed into a higher unity, the root being susceptible of inward modification as well as of affixes to denote form: flexional languages.

Schleicher employs quasi-mathematical formulas to illustrate these three classes: if we denote a root by  $R$ , a prefix by  $p$  and a suffix by  $s$ , and finally use a raised  $x$  to denote an inner modification, we see that in the isolated languages we have nothing but  $R$  (a sentence may be represented by  $R R R R \dots$ ), a word in the second class has the formula  $R s$  or  $p R$  or  $p R s$ , but in the third class we may have  $p R^x s$  (or  $R^x s$ ).

Now, according to Schleicher the three classes of languages are not only found simultaneously in the tongues of our own day, but they represent three stages of linguistic development; «to the *nebeneinander* of the system corresponds the *nacheinander* of history». Beyond the flexional stage no language can attain; the symbolic denotation of relation by flexion is the highest accomplishment of language; speech has here effectually realized its object, which is to give a faithful phonetic image of thought. But before a language can become flexional it must have passed through an isolating and an agglutinating period. Is this theory borne out by historical facts? Can we trace back any of the existing flexional languages to agglutination and isolation? Schleicher himself answers this question in the negative: the earliest Latin was of as good a flexional type as are the modern Romanic languages. This would seem a sort of contradiction in terms; but the orthodox Hegelian is ready with an answer to any objection; he has the word of his master that History cannot begin till the human spirit becomes «conscious of its own freedom», and this consciousness is only possible after the complete development of language. The formation of Language and History are accordingly successive stages of human activity. Moreover, as history and historiography, i. e. literature, come into existence simultaneously, Schleicher is enabled to express the same idea in



a way that is « only seemingly paradoxical », namely that the development of language is brought to a conclusion as soon as literature makes its appearance; this is a crisis after which language remains fixed; language has now become a means, instead of being the aim, of intellectual activity. We never meet with any language that is developing or that has become more perfect; in historical times all languages move only downhill; linguistic history means decay of languages as such, subjugated as they are through the gradual evolution of the mind to greater freedom.

The reader of the above survey of previous statements will easily see that in the matter itself Schleicher adds very little of his own. Even the expressions, which are here given throughout in Schleicher's own words, are in some cases recognizable as identical with, or closely similar to, those of earlier scholars.

He made one coherent system out of ideas of classification and development already found in others. What is new is the philosophical substructure of Hegelian origin, and there can be no doubt that Schleicher imagined that by this addition he contributed very much towards giving stability and durability to the whole system. And yet this proved to be the least stable and durable part of the structure, and as a matter of fact the Hegelian reasoning is not repeated by a single one of those who give their adherence to the classification. Nor can it be said to carry conviction, and undoubtedly it has seemed to most linguists at the same time too rigid and too unreal to have any importance.

But apart from the philosophical argument the classification proved very successful in the particular shape it had found in Schleicher. Its adoption into two such widely read works as Max Müller's and Whitney's Lectures on the Science of Language contributed very much to the popularity of the system, though the former's attempt at ascribing to the tripartition a sociological importance by saying that juxtaposition (isolation) is characteristic of the « family stage », agglutination of the « nomadic stage » and amalgamation (flexion) of the « political stage » of human society was hardly taken seriously by anybody.

The chief reasons for the popularity of this classification are not far to seek. It is easy of handling and appeals to

**the natural fondness for clear-cut formulas through its specious appearance of regularity and rationality.** Besides it flatters wide-spread prejudices in so far as it places the two groups of languages highest that are spoken by those nations which have culturally and religiously exercised the deepest influence on the civilization of the world, Arians and Semites. Therefore also Pott's view according to which the incorporating or « polysynthetic » American languages possess the same characteristics that distinguish flexion as against agglutination only in a still higher degree, is generally tacitly discarded, for obviously it would not do to place some languages of American Indians higher than Sanskrit or Greek. But when these are looked upon as the very flower of linguistic development it is quite natural to regard the modern languages of western Europe as degenerate corruptions of the ancient more highly flexional languages; this is in perfect keeping with the prevalent admiration for the classical antiquity and with the belief in a golden age long before our own times. Arguments such as these may not have been consciously in the minds of the framers of the ordinary classification, but there can be no doubt that they have been unconsciously working in favour of the system, though very little thought seems to be required to show the fallacy of the assumption that high civilization has any intrinsic and necessary connexion with the *grammatical* construction of the language spoken by the race or nation concerned. No language of modern Europe presents the flexional type in a purer shape than Lithuanian, where we find preserved nearly the same grammatical system as in old Sanskrit, yet no one would assert that the culture of Lithuanian peasants is higher than that of Shakespeare, whose language has lost an enormous amount of the old flexions. Culture and language must be appraised separately, each on its own merits and independently of the other.

From a purely linguistic point of view there are many objections to the usual classification, though they seem never to have been brought together in a comprehensive way; some of them have been indicated or hinted at in my own book *Progress in Language* (London 1894, reprinted 1909, a new edition in preparation).

First let us look upon the tripartition as purporting a comprehensive classification of languages as existing side by

side without any regard to historic development (the *nebeneinander* of Schleicher). Here it does not seem to be an ideal manner of classifying a great many objects to establish three classes of such different dimensions that the first comprises only Chinese and some other related languages of the Far East, and the third only two families of languages, while the second includes hundreds of unrelated languages of the most heterogeneous character. It seems certain that the languages of class I represent one definite type of linguistic structure, and it may be that Arian and Semitic should be classed together on account of the similarity of their structure, though this is by no means quite certain and has been denied (by Bopp, in recent times by Porzezinski); but what is indubitable is that the « agglutinating » class is made to comprehend languages of the most diverse type, even if we follow Pott and exclude from this class all incorporating languages. Finnish is always mentioned as a typically agglutinative language, yet there we meet with such declensional forms as nominative *vesi* 'water', *toinen* 'second', partitive *vetta*, *toista*, genitive *veden*, *toisen*, and such verbal forms as *sido-n* 'I bind', *sido-t* 'thou bindest', *sito-o* 'he binds' and the three corresponding persons in the plural *sido-mme*, *sido-tte*, *sito-rat*. Here we are far from having one unchangeable root to which endings have been glued, for the root itself undergoes changes before the endings. In Kiyombe (Congo) the perfect of verbs is in many cases formed by means of a vowel change that is a complete parallel to the apophony in English *drink drank*, thus *vanga* 'do', perfect *vengi*, *tuala* 'bring', perfect *twele* or *trede*, etc. (Anthropos II, p. 761). Examples like these show that flexion, in whatever way we may define this term, is not the privilege of the Arians and Semites, but may be found in other nations as well. Agglutination is either too vague a term to be used in classification, or else if it is taken strictly according to the usual definition it is too definite to comprise many of the languages which are ordinarily reckoned to the second class.

It will be seen, also, that those writers who aim at giving descriptions of a variety of human tongues, or of them all, do not content themselves with the usual three classes, but have a greater number. This began with Steinthal, who in various works tried to classify languages partly from geographical, partly from structural points of view, without however

arriving at any definite or consistent system. Friedrich Müller in his great *Grundriss der Sprachwissenschaft* really gives up the psychological or structural division of languages, distributing the more than hundred different languages that he describes among twelve races of mankind characterized chiefly by external criteria that have nothing to do with language. Misteli establishes six main types. I. Incorporating. II. Root-isolating. III. Stem-isolating. IV. Affixing (Anreihende). V. Agglutinating. VI. Flexional. These he also distributes so as to form four classes: (1) languages with sentence-words: I; (2) languages with no words: II, III and IV; (3) languages with apparent words: V; and (4) languages with real words: VI. But the latter division had better be left alone; it turns on the intricate question « What constitutes a word? » and ultimately depends on the usual depreciation of « inferior races » and corresponding exaltation of our own race, which is alone reputed capable of possessing « real words ». I do not see why we should not recognize that the vocables of Greenlandic, Malay, Kafir or Finnish are just as « real » words as any in Hebrew or Latin.

It may also be questioned whether the usual description of Chinese as consisting of invariable monosyllabic root words is not too dependent on the peculiar system of writing used in that language; if it had been written alphabetically it is quite possible that what are now called « empty words » would in many cases have been written together with the « full words » they qualify and have then been termed affixes, with the result that Chinese had been reckoned among agglutinating languages. And if we look at those instances in which the tone only serves to distinguish words meaning 'king' and 'become king', or 'work' and 'pay the work', 'buy' and 'sell', etc., we may feel tempted to say that we have here instances of a kind of flexion in the Schlegelian sense of inner modification, not much different from the vowel changes in Arian, especially that in English *song*, *sing*, etc.

Our final result then is that the tripartition is insufficient and inadequate to serve as a comprehensive classification of languages as actually existing. Nor should we wonder at this if we see the way in which the theory began historically in an *obiter dictum* of Fr. v. Schlegel at a time when the inner structure of only a few languages was properly studied, and

if we consider the lack of clearness and definiteness inherent in such notions as agglutination and flexion, which are nevertheless made the corner-stones of the whole system. We therefore must go back to the wise saying of Humboldt quoted above that the structural diversities of languages are too great for us to classify them comprehensively.

Finally we come to consider the tripartition as representing three successive stages in the development of such languages as our own (the *nacheinander* of Schleicher). Here I may be allowed to speak with the utmost brevity, for I have in the book already mentioned dealt with this theory at some length. It is true that in some instances history shows us something like the three stages collocation, agglutination, and integration (to use Whitney's expressions) through which originally independent words have become flexional endings; but these instances are far too few for us to infer from them that the direction of development has been always and everywhere the same; many of the explanations through agglutination given by Bopp and believed in by his immediate successors have proved fanciful and have been given up by the younger generation of students of language. The theory of an uphill movement in prehistoric and a downhill movement in historic times may be considered thoroughly exploded, and very much may be adduced in favour of the view that the main direction of movement has been at all times the same that we observe in modern languages, from greater complication and irregularity towards greater ease and simplicity and regularity, or — as I express it in the work twice referred to, — from chaos to cosmos.

From both points of view, then, the classification here contemplated deserves to be shelved among the hasty generalizations of which the history of every branch of science is unfortunately so rich.

— *Scientia*, Vol. 28, 1920.

## NATURE AND ART IN LANGUAGE<sup>1</sup>

IT is customary to speak of such languages as English, French and German as natural, and such languages as Esperanto, Ido, Volapük, Occidental, Novial as artificial.

It will be my task in this paper to show that this distinction is not exact, as the difference is one of degree rather than of species; very much in the so-called natural languages is "artificial," and very much in the so-called artificial languages is quite natural, at any rate in all those schemes that count; therefore it would be wise to choose more adequate terms. I shall consequently speak of the first class of languages as national languages, and of the second class as constructed or systematically planned languages. The latter may also be termed international languages, for the purpose of those constructed languages with which we are to deal here is to serve as international auxiliary languages, i.e. means of communication between persons belonging to different speech communities.

First, then, as to the national languages spoken in various countries: are they altogether natural, that is, developed unconsciously or subconsciously by nations rather than consciously by individuals? Formerly languages were often spoken of as organisms whose natural growth was thought to be analogous to that of plants or even animals; but linguists have come to realize that this is a wrong view, because a language has no independent existence apart from those individuals who speak it. Still it is true that the vast majority of linguistic facts have come about by what may without any infringement of scientific precision be termed natural growth. This

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<sup>1</sup> *American Speech*, 5.89 ff. (1929); much has here been added to the latter part of the paper.

is especially true of linguistic structure, or what we generally call grammar. No single individual, no body of individuals, ever sat down deliberately to frame the endings and other means by which plurals or past tenses are expressed in English or any other language. If now *men* is the plural of *man*, and *drank* the past tense (preterit) of the verb *to drink*, this goes back to very early times, and linguistic historians are able to point out that the vowel changes in these words did not at first possess the grammatical significance which they have now, but were brought about mechanically in consequence of influences from previous endings or accentual differences, while those grammatical endings which in the earliest stages of the language served to mark plural and past tense respectively, have disappeared altogether—a development which took centuries, the forms being handed over from generation to generation while no one was ever aware of any changes going on in the sounds and in the grammatical value attached to these sounds.

Similarly with most of our common words, like *house*, *grass*, *green*, *bind*, *never*, etc. etc. They go back to immemorial times, and the changes in sound and in meaning which linguists may be able to point out can no more than the words themselves be traced back to any definite individual, though scholars may be inclined to say that theoretically the initiative must have come from one individual, or perhaps from several individuals each of whom hit upon the same expression or the same modification of an already existing expression.

On the other hand there are many words that have been deliberately coined in recent times, and some of them have become extremely popular. *Kodak*—a mere arbitrary collection of sounds without any perceptible association with existing words—is now known all over the world and often used for 'camera' in general, thus not restricted to that particular make for which it was originally framed. Generally the inventors of trade names for things they want to puff take one or two elements from national languages, living or dead, adding some usual ending and combining these elements *ad libitum*, often with supreme contempt for the ordinary rules for word-formation observed in the languages from which the elements are taken. This does not matter greatly, so long as the

result is tolerably euphonious—and the article is saleable! It would, perhaps, be invidious to give examples, but anyone can find some in the advertizing sections of newspapers and magazines.

We move in a somewhat higher sphere, though the process is strictly analogous, when we come to consider those new terms which abound in all branches of science. If you look through a list of chemical elements you will find a curious jumble of words of different kinds. First we have the well-known old national words going back to immemorial times and therefore perfectly 'natural,' words like *gold*, *iron*, *tin*, etc., next words like *hydrogen*, *oxygen*, formed from Greek roots by the first scientific chemists towards the end of the eighteenth century, and then a long string of words coined in even more recent times, some of them from the name of the first discoverer, like *Samarium* and *Gadolinium*, others more or less fancifully from the names of planets or goddesses, like *cerium*, *uranium*, *palladium*, or from similar Greek words, *helium* from *helios* 'sun,' *selenium* from *selene* 'moon,' *neon* from *neon* 'a new thing,' etc. The latest fashion is to add the ending *-um* to the name of the place where the element was discovered: this may have originated in a misapprehension of *gallium* as if from *Gallia* France, though it really came from a translation of the name of the discoverer *Lecoq* (1875); but place-names are found in *germanium*, *ytterbium* (from the Swedish town Ytterbo), *hafnium* (from the Latin name of Copenhagen, because discovered at Niels Bohr's laboratory there). Most of these names remain the possession of the happy few specialists, but others, like *aluminium* (coined by Sir Humphry Davy about 1812), are known by laymen as well.

The names in *-ium* here mentioned show the natural tendency to use the same ending in coined words of similar meaning. This is seen also in other chemical and mineralogical terms; thus we have the ending *-ite* in *melanite*, *dynamite*, *graphite*, *humboldtite*, etc., adapted from old Greek words like *anthracite*, *chlorite*. Another ending that is exclusively used in such coinages is *-ol*, taken from *alcohol* (originally an Arabic word in which the ending has no derivative value) and extended to a great many names of substances: *carbinol*, *methol*, *naphthol*, *phenol*, *creosol*, *odol*, (a tooth-wash, very irregularly formed from Greek *odous*, *odontos*, tooth). A



curious formation is seen in *carfeial* from *car*(bon) + *fer*(rum) + *al*(umina).

While we have here seen names of concrete things or substances formed consciously in recent times, most sciences in their modern developments have felt greater need of abstract terms, and have produced such in great numbers, chiefly from Greek and Latin roots. Here we may mention the names of various branches and subbranches of sciences made necessary in our day by the ever growing specialization of science: *biology*, *biochemistry*, *photochemistry*, *entomology*, *otology*, *anthropology* and many more in *-ology* and *-ography*. *Sociology* when framed by Auguste Comte was objected to because it was a hybrid of Latin and Greek, but the work filled a gap and has now gained a firm footing together with *sociological* and *sociologist*. Recent writers on heredity use extensively Wilhelm Johannsen's coinages *genotype* and *phenotype*, and similar technical terms that may be traced back to individual specialists abound in all recent books on science. The tendency to form new terms for useful or even indispensable notions is perfectly legitimate, but some scientists carry the tendency to such extremes that one is tempted to speak of terminological hypertrophy; among linguists I must mention as sinners in that respect the Swede A. Noreen and the Belgian A. Carnoy: in the latter's book "La Science du Mot" (Louvain 1927) there are at least 35 words in *-sémie*, most of them coined by the author himself, and some of them really quite superfluous.

It may surprise some readers to hear that poets and novelists are responsible for extremely few word-coinages: what they have done is chiefly to give literary currency to words that were already used in everyday speech. Shakespeare is perhaps the author of *bumbailiff*, but Dickens does not seem to have been the inventor of the word *bumble'om*, though it is formed from the name of the beadle Bumble in *Oliver Twist*: and if that name was remembered it was because the common name *bumble* was already in existence and was a very expressive word (cf. *jumble*, *grumble*, *bungle*, etc.). *Spoof* as the name of a game of hoaxing and nonsensical character and then as a general name for humbug or hoax is traced back to the comedian A. Roberts, but hundreds of similar slang words have been and are daily coined in all countries—anonymously, for no one cares to record

their authors, and yet they must ultimately be referred to individuals, who give vent to sudden impulses to blurt forth jocular or contemptuous words never heard before. Most of these whimsical formations are stillborn, but some take the fancy of the hearers and are spread in wider and wider circles, chiefly those words that seem to fill a gap and are felt as expressive. Many of them are so similar to already existing words and so easily associated with the ordinary vocabulary of the language that they are hardly felt as new words. But that is only another expression for the fact that these words are "natural," and we thus see how "natural" it is "artificially" to frame new words under certain circumstances: art and nature cannot be separated by a hard and fast line of boundary. Slang is that "art" of language which comes "natural" to some people (chiefly young) and to some moods.<sup>1</sup>

Sometimes one is reminded of the way in which contagious diseases spread when one sees how certain suffixes become the fashion and are used in an increasing number of new words. A case in point is *-eria* in recent American use: it began with *cafeteria*, a Spanish or pseudo-Spanish word adopted in California and giving rise to a whole mania of new coinages: *basketeria*—a store where baskets are sold; *chocolateria*, *fruiteria*, *luncheteria*, *valeteria* an establishment for cleaning and pressing clothes; even *bobateria* where the hair of women is bobbed. A synonymous ending is *-torium*: *barbatorium*, *printorium*, *bobatorium*, *pantorium*, or *pantatorium* a synonym of *valeteria*; one may doubt whether the new *healthatorium* will succeed in ousting the older and better established *sanatorium* (in Europe) or *sanitarium* (chiefly in U.S.A.). At any rate such words, barbarous as they appear to the purist, are of the greatest interest to the student of linguistic psychology and to the adherent of the idea of a constructed language for international communication.

I may also here briefly refer to such jocular blendings of two words as *squarson* from *squire* + *parson*, and *brunch* from *breakfast* + *lunch*, *tunch* from *tea* + *lunch*.

Twenty-five years ago a Danish newspaper offered a prize for the best word to be used instead of the heavy *automobil*; the prize was

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<sup>1</sup> See on slang my book "Mankind, Nation and Individual", 1925, p. 149 ff.

given to *bil*, which spread very rapidly and is now the term used universally not only in Denmark, but also in Sweden and Norway: it lends itself easily to compounds, and a verb *at bile* (to motor) is readily formed from it, which is the more convenient as it forms a natural group with some other verbs denoting rapid motion: *ile* (to hurry), *pile af*, *kile af*. It is more doubtful whether the word resulting from a recent competition opened by the same paper to find a name for a person celebrating his birthday will be equally successful: *fødselar*, formed from *fødselsdag* birthday with the ending of *jubilær*, one who celebrates his jubilee.

One of the best authenticated instances of instantaneous coinages that have been accepted by a nation at large is *gerrymander*: "In 1812, while Elbridge Gerry was Governor of Massachusetts, the Democratic legislature, in order to secure an increased representation in the State Senate, districted the State in such a way that the shape of the towns ..... brought out a territory of irregular outline. This was indicated on a map . . . . Stuart the painter, observing it, added a head, wings, and claws, and exclaimed, "That will do for a salamander." "Gerrymander!" said Russell, and the word became a proverb."

Hungarian (Magyar), the development of which as a literary language is one of the youngest in Europe, is particularly rich in words and terms that have been consciously and deliberately coined or selected. One particularly striking instance has been mentioned by several linguists. The Hungarian word *mintá* means 'pattern, form, model' and enters into scores of derivatives and compounds; it sounds like a Hungarian word and does as good service as any other word. But if ever anything was manufactured in a retort it was this—and according to a misread recipe at that. The Swedish word for 'mint' or 'coin' is *mynt*, which was taken over into Lapp as *mynta*. In some old Lapp dictionary the translation 'pattern' belonging to the word *minstar* (cf. German *muster*) had through a printer's error found its way to the word following it, *mintá*. Here Father Faludi found it about 1770; he took a fancy to *mintá* because it reminded him of Magyar *mint a* 'as the; he introduced the printer's error into Magyar, which is remotely related to Lapp, and it came to stay there without any brand of infamy. Many pages in S. Simónyi's great work "Die

Ungarische Sprache'' are filled with an account of the way in which writers consciously enriched this language; of one novelist Barcafalvi Szabó Dávid it is said that he applied himself to coining words as if in a manufactory. Some fifty words of his are still common property in the literary language.

In some cases the natural, unconscious development of a language has led to too great similarity between forms or words which it is particularly important to distinguish, and then conscious action has sometimes to be taken to regulate matters. The two old terms *starboard* and *larboard* seem to have been good enough in the old ships, but in modern steamboats with their greater dimensions and greater noise they were so often mistaken for one another, sometimes with fatal results, that the British marine authorities in 1844 were obliged to issue the order that *port* be used instead of *larboard*. A mistake of one numeral for another is specially annoying in telephoning, hence it has been agreed in Germany to revive the old form *zwo* for 'two,' as *zwei* was constantly misheard as *drei* and vice versa (*zwo* is used also in the German marine). In England (and, I suppose, in America as well) *nought* and *four* were so often misheard for one another, that *o* had to be adopted as the official name for 0 instead of *nought*. In Rio Janeiro the number *seis* (6) was liable to be mixed up with *tres* (3) or *sete* (7), so in calling the number on the phone one has to say *meia duzia* 'half-dozen;' 66 is called *meia-meia duzia*, which is often abbreviated into *meia-meia*—which thus leads to a curious and nowhere else paralleled sense-development from 'half' to 'six.' In Japanese there are two series of numerals in use, one of native origin, and the other imported from Chinese; but as the forms of the latter series *shi* (4), *shitsshi* (7) can easily be confused, they are avoided when prices of wares are indicated, on the telephone, and generally when it is important to avoid mistakes: then people will say *jottsu* (4), or the shortened form *jo* (4), and *nanatsu* or *nana* (7); for similar reasons *kju* is substituted for *ku* (9).

I have no space here for more than a very brief mention of a highly artificial linguistic trick that has lately come into fashion in many countries, namely that of coining terms from the initials of a composite expression, which are read either separately with the

traditional names, as in Y.M.C.A. (in Danish correspondingly K.F.U.M.), or pronounced together, as *Dora* (Defence of Realm Act). This fashion was especially in vogue during the late war, and was extended even to such expressions as P.D.Q. = pretty damn quick. I must refrain from giving more examples from English and from mentioning more than one example from German: *Hapag* = Hamburg Amerika Packet Actien Gesellschaft, one from Italian: *Fiat* = Fabbrica Italiana di Automobili Torino, and one from Russian: *Tcheka* = Tchrezvytchayniy Komitet (Extraordinary Committee).

Many words in various languages have been coined by purists to avoid the adoption of foreign words. This is not the place for a discussion of the merits of purism in general, but something must be said of the psychological aspect of the question from the point of view of the contrast that forms the subject of this paper. When a speaker or writer wants to express a notion, for which his native language has no word, while one is known to him in another language, two ways are open to him. Either he may take the foreign word and use it in the middle of his own language, with or without such slight changes in sound, spelling or inflexion as may make it more palatable to his countrymen, or he may try to coin a new term by means of native speech material, either a compound or a derivative of some existing word. Which of these two procedures is the more natural? It will be hard to answer this question beforehand and once for all.<sup>1</sup> As a matter of fact some nations prefer one way, and others another, and the same nation may even at various periods of its life change its preference in this respect.

This is seen very clearly in the case of English. In Old English times it was the fashion to form native words for those hundreds of new notions that were introduced with Christianity and the higher bookish culture that came in the wake of the new religion. Thus we find *gesomnung* for congregation, *witega* for prophet, *throwere* for martyr, *sunderhalga* (from *sunder* separate and *halga* holy) for Pharisee, *handpreost* for chaplain, *beabbiscop* (*beah* = high) for archbishop, *dypppan* (to dip) for baptize, *læcecræft* (leechcraft)

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the discussion of this problem with regard to Danish in my "Tanker og Studier" (Copenhagen 1932), p. 140 ff., cf. 74 ff.

for medicine, *efnniht* (*efn* = even) for equinox, *tungol-æ* (star-law) for astronomy, and many others. It will be seen from the translations given that the English nation as a whole has given up the propensity to form native words for such ideas and now prefers to go to French and especially to the two classical tongues; many of these at first foreign elements have now become part and parcel of the English language, and the habit of taking ready-made words from abroad instead of trying to express the same idea by native means has become so firmly rooted that even such innocent words as *handbook* (for manual)<sup>1</sup> and *folklore* were for a long time looked upon as curious whims of purists, i.e., as "unnatural" and foreign to the speech-instincts of ordinary people. In his *Dictionary of Modern English Usage* Mr. Fowler writes:

"*Foreword* is a word invented fifty years ago as a Saxonism by antilatinists, & caught up as a vogue-word by the people who love a new word for an old thing ..... It is to be hoped that the vogue may pass, & the taste of the general public prevail again over that of publishers and authors."

In another place he says that "the truth is perhaps that conscious deliberate Saxonism is folly" and this condemnation doubtless expresses the opinion of the average educated Englishman and American—though it may perhaps be doubted whether the ordinary man in the street who has not had the benefit of much school teaching would not in many cases prefer terms that were at once transparent to him, to those adopted by his learned compatriots.

Among countries which prefer making their own terms to adopting foreign words must be mentioned Iceland. The visitor to Reykjavik is astonished to find the great number of native words for things which have nearly everywhere in the civilized world the same names: *reiðhjól* for bicycle, *skrifstofa* for bureau, *fallbyssa* for cannon, *skammbýssa* for pistol, *bókasafn* for library (French bibliothèque), *sími* telephone and telegraph, *tundurdufl* mine, *tundurbátur* torpedo-boat. The names of sciences are all native: *guðfræði* theology, *læknisfræði* medicine, *grasafræði* botany, *dýrafræði* zoology, *efnafræði* chemistry, etc., and the same is true of such scientific terms as

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Jespersen, *Growth and Structure of the Engl. L.* § 47.

*afleiðsla* deduction, *aðleiðsla* induction, *blutrænn* objective, *hugrænn* subjective. Some of these terms are comparatively recent, and in many cases my Icelandic friends have been able to name to me the originators of terms that are now current there; Jónas Hallgrímsson started in 1842 many astronomical terms and Magnúss Grímsson in 1852 many physical terms, e.g. *ljósvaki* ether, *sólnánd* perihelium, *rafur-magn* electricity, *tvíetting* polarity. From the latest time we have *viðboð* for broadcasting, as it were wide-message.

Similar tendencies are found in another northern country, Finland. On account of the more foreign character of the vocabulary (Finnish belongs to the Finno-Ugric, not to the Indo-European family of languages) I shall give fewer examples. Nature is *luonto* (from *luo* create), religion is *uskonto* (from *uskoa* believe), electricity is *sähkö*, telegraph is *sananlennätin*, an ingenious formation from *sana* word, (genitive *sanan*) and *lennin* fly, *lennättää* to make something fly, send off rapidly.

In Czech native formations have been extremely successful in keeping learned loan-words out, as I learn from some interesting papers by O. Vočadlo.

In Germany, and similarly in Denmark and Sweden, both those extremes which we found in modern English and Icelandic, are avoided: there are a certain number of perfectly natural native formations, and by the side of them many Greek and Latin loan-words, chiefly for purely scientific notions, but also for such everyday things (based, it is true, on scientific inventions) as telegraphy, photography, etc. But in these countries purists have for a long time been at work to introduce new native formations, and not unfrequently they have been successful, especially where they have been able to induce political and administrative authorities to take an interest in the matter. It is well known that Kaiser Wilhelm at some time favoured these tendencies, and had some influence in the supplanting of *telephone* by *fernsprecher* (*fernsprechamt* telephone office, *fernsprechapparat* receiver, etc.). Not many years ago the word *billet* 'ticket' was officially supplanted by *fabrikant*, while the German-speaking Swiss still use the word *billet*. But the number of these official purisms is not very considerable. *Rad* for cycle, and *radfabren*, *rad-*

*fahrer* etc., are probably popular in their origin.<sup>1</sup> So far as I know, *kraftwagen*, though supported officially, is much less used than the more convenient foreign word *auto*; *kraftwagenhalle* is a native, but unnatural equivalent of *garage*.<sup>2</sup>

While a spoken language is found wherever human beings live together and must thus be considered part of human nature, the same cannot be said of written language, which is everywhere of much later origin and must really be called an unnatural substitute for spoken words. But in the same way as so many things that were at first "unnatural" inventions—the use of clothes, fire, and in later times matches, electric light, telephones, etc.—have come to be felt as so natural that our children from the very first years come to look upon them as self-evident things which they think must have existed from the very dawn of human life, so it is also with writing, which we now consider a natural way of communicating with fellow-beings. Natural, that is, to some extent only, for it cannot be denied that, as most of our civilized languages are now written, there is a good deal in them that can hardly be called natural. In the first place as regards spelling. As soon as people had invented the art of representing each speech sound, or let us rather say, each of the principal speech sounds or phonemes, by means of a separate symbol, the natural thing was to write down spoken words as faithfully as possible, and that was what people really did, or tried to do. But soon tradition came into play, and people were taught not to depend on their own ears and write down words as they themselves pronounced them, but to spell as their teachers, that is to say roughly as an older generation, pronounced the words; and as this went on continually and the spelling of words was changed much less than their pronunciation, the gap between the two forms of language became greater and greater. The results with regard to English and some other languages are patent enough, especially if we compare them with the beautifully simple spelling of such languages as Finnish, which have not been literary languages long enough for tradition

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Dutch *fietst* 'bike'.

<sup>2</sup> On recent endeavours among technicians to bring about linguistic norms for the creation of new words and to settle the meanings of technical terms see F. Wüster, *Internationale sprachnormung in der technik* (Berlin, VDI-verlag, 1931).



to have had the same effect. In some countries Academies (as in Spain) or ministers of instruction (as in Germany and Denmark) have from time to time interfered with spelling and discarded some of the worst anomalies: but are such regulations "natural" or unnatural?

There are other artificial elements in written language besides spelling. As writing addresses itself to the eye, many of the subtle effects perceivable by the ear (intonation, etc.) are utterly lost when sentences are written down, punctuation marks being at best a poor substitute for much of what makes spoken words expressive. The whole structure of sentences and their combination has to be changed, and even the simplest familiar letter has to be formed in a different way from the same communication if it had been oral. This rearrangement has to be learnt artificially, though much of it may come unconsciously by instinctive imitation of models of various kinds.

As in spelling, so in grammar, teachers will often insist on forms that really belong to an extinct stratum of their language. In English—to give only one example—hundreds of passages in Elizabethan writers show conclusively that *who* had supplanted *whom* in natural spoken language: "Who did you see?" "Who is that letter for?" Schoolmasters, however, insisted on the old form—at any rate in writing, for in ordinary conversation they were not very successful. The result is that people who want to show off their superior education write *whom* even in cases where their teachers, had they been consistent grammarians, would have understood that *who* was the correct form, and it is now easy to collect scores of examples, even in the books of very good writers, of such constructions as these: "power to summon whomsoever might throw light upon the events." "Peggotty always volunteered this information to whomsoever would receive it." "She talked nonsense to whomsoever was near to her."

Poetry and religious prose everywhere are "naturally" fond of "artificial" archaic expressions, and in some countries all prose writing, even the most everyday communication, has to be clothed in a linguistic garb that really belongs to a distant past. In Dutch the written language is only beginning to get rid of the old word genders which were given up in the spoken language long ago, and many people have to consult a dictionary very frequently in order

not to make blunders in the use of the forms of the definite article and pronouns. As Dr. Kruisinga says: "In older Dutch, nouns had a threefold gender, and were inflected differently accordingly, as well as their attributive adjuncts. Although this has been lost for many centuries, it has been artificially preserved in the spelling, details being settled arbitrarily by grammarians. This artificial system is still used by the majority of Dutch writers in Holland, and is supposed to be taught in schools, although many schoolmasters practically ignore it."

When Dr. Kruisinga says that this complete severance between written and real language is "unique among the languages of Europe," he is forgetting for the moment Modern Greek, where the written language is artificially screwed several centuries back, not only in one point of grammar, as in Dutch, but in every way. The prestige of the old language with its wonderful literature has been so great that children are taught at school to write many forms that have been extinct for centuries, and it is the ambition of every Greek writer to keep his language as near as possible to the old standard, though it is of course impossible to blot out everything modern. Feelings are very strong in Greece on this subject, and a revolution was even threatened when the attempt was made to introduce the New Testament translated into the modern vernacular: the original text, it was said, was written in Greek and that ought to suffice (even if much of it was not at all understood by ordinary people nowadays).

Similar linguistic conditions with a written language artificially preserved in spite of its distance from the living speech prevail in other parts of the world, notably in Southern India (Telugu), in Tibet, in China and in Japan; but what I have already adduced here must be sufficient to prove my thesis that much in the so-called "natural" languages is very far from deserving that name.<sup>1</sup>

We may now pass to constructed languages. Their number is legion, and they represent many different stages of artificiality, from

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<sup>1</sup> I must refrain here from a discussion of conditions in Norway, where the conflict between Dano-Norwegian (which to parts of the population was more or less artificial) and Ivar Aasen's half-artificial, half-natural *landsmål* has not yet led to a truly national language.

the purely "philosophical" or a-priori systems, in which all words are created arbitrarily and systematically without the least regard to any national language, down to those recent schemes which boast of being so natural that they can be read at sight by any educated West-European or American.

Languages of the former kind have this advantage that they may be untrammelled by the deficiencies which (it must be admitted) cling to all national languages, many words of which are sadly wanting in that precision which is desired by the strict logician. But as there is no connexion between the coined words of a philosophical language and familiar words, everything has to be learnt anew, and the task of memorizing such a language is enormous, much greater than in the case of those languages whose vocabulary is based on national languages. On the first of them, constructed by Bishop Wilkins in 1668, Leibniz said that besides its inventor the only man who learnt it was Robert Boyle: yet it must be called a truly ingenious piece of work.

Let me now try very briefly to indicate what should be natural and what may be artificial in a constructed language meant to be used for international purposes.<sup>1</sup> So far as possible no single element of the language should be arbitrarily coined; everything that is already international should be used, and utilized to the utmost extent. Where there is no perfectly international word (or "stem" or "root") the form which approaches that ideal should be taken, the principle being throughout the maximum of intelligibility to the greatest number combined with the maximum of ease in practical handling.

The question whether ready-made words should be adopted from national languages or new compounds or derivatives be formed with the speech-material already incorporated in the language cannot be settled once and for all: in some cases one, and in others the other procedure may be preferable; for purely scientific terms the former procedure will generally be the most natural, but as soon as we leave the domain of pure science and have to speak of everyday objects and occurrences, we must remember that many a word formed by

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<sup>1</sup> I have tried to carry out these principles in *Novial*, see my books "An International Language" (G. Allen & Unwin, London, 1928), German edition "Eine internationale sprache" (Winter, Heidelberg, 1928)—and "Novial lexike" (same editors, 1930).

means of a well-known derivative ending put on to an international word will be perfectly transparent to everybody, even if it has no previous existence in any national language.

The phonetic system must be as simple as possible and contain no sounds or combinations which would present difficulty to many nations. Hence we can admit the five vowels *a, e, i, o, u* only, but neither nasalized vowels nor rounded front vowels (*ü, ö*), which are absent from such important languages as English, Spanish, Italian, Russian. As regards consonants we are similarly obliged to exclude palatalized sounds, such as those in French *agneau*; It. *ogni, egli*; Spanisch *año, calle*; and the German *ch*- and the English *th*-sounds. By the exclusive use of *s*, where some languages distinguish a voiceless *s* and a voiced *z*, an important simplification is gained, not only because some nations are ignorant of that distinction, but also because the distribution of the two letters would necessarily be often arbitrary and consequently would have to be separately remembered for each word. Accentuation (stress and tone) should not be used to discriminate words.

The alphabet must be that which is known to the greatest number, namely the Latin, in spite of its many shortcomings; but it should not be complicated by arbitrary additions to and modifications of its letters, such as accents over or cedilles under them. Nor is it desirable to use letters in a way that is not familiar to the great majority of presumptive users: if combinations like *ca, co, cu* are to be used at all, they must have the phonetic value given to them in all European and American countries except Polish and Czech, that is to say that *c* before these vowels as before consonants should be pronounced like *k* and not like *ts*. But as *c* before *e* and *i* is pronounced in four or five different ways in those national languages that count, it seems better to do without that difficult letter altogether; as a matter of fact no one will feel any difficult in spellings like *konsert*, etc. This is certainly more natural and less artificial than spelling *car* and meaning *tsar*.

The spelling, too, must be as easy as possible; we must therefore avail ourselves of all such simplifications as have already been made in some languages, e.g. *f* instead of *ph*, *t* instead of *th*; single instead of double consonants, as in Spanish. No letter should be al-

lowed to have two distinct pronunciations according to its position; *g* in *gi*, *ge* must sound as in *ga*, *go* (cp. Engl. *give*, *get*, not as in *gin*, *gem*). I know very well that many people would prefer *c* in *conclusionē*, *crua*, *clari*, etc., where I prefer *k*; the Romanic nations and the English dislike the letter *k* (which is not beautiful!); but the reader must be asked to consider the fact that not only the Germans, the Dutch, and the Scandinavians, but also the Slav nations, thus very many millions, write *k* in Latin loan-words (in Polish, for instance, *kleryk*, *kredyt*, *klasa*, *kronika*, *krystal*; correspondingly in Czech, Russian, etc.). The new official Turkish spelling with Roman instead of Arabic letters is in perfect agreement with the rules I had adopted for Novial before knowing of that fact: *bank*, *koridor*, *fabrika*, *kontrol*, *kolosal*, *sigar*, *sivil*, *bisiklet*, etc. Anyhow, *k* seems indispensable before *e* and *i*, e.g. *anke*, *kelki*, *kelke*; *amike* friend (epicene), hence naturally *amiko* male and *amika* female friend, *amikal* friendly. I grant, however, that a moderate use of *c* and *z* in those words in which they are tully international would present some advantages and would not essentially affect the character of Novial.

In grammar the same principle of the greatest ease should be carried through, wherever possible. No irregularities of the kind found so often in national languages should be tolerated. The grammatical material should be, and can be, taken from existing languages even to a greater extent than is done in some recent constructed languages. For the plural of nouns the ending *-s* seems to be the best, as it is found in some of the most important languages and can easily be applied to all words, especially if care is taken not to let substantives end in consonants. To distinguish the two sexes the endings *-o* and *-a* seem appropriate, and then *-e* can be used in all substantives denoting either lifeless things or living beings for which it is not necessary specially to indicate sex. Further it seems a very important principle to apply these endings not only to nouns, but also to pronouns. Most interlinguists do not acknowledge this principle and thus set up special pronominal forms for these two categories, alleging that pronouns are irregular in all national languages, and that it is therefore against ordinary linguistic psychology to create regular pronouns. This, however, is only a half-truth, one might

even say that it is a fallacy: in their historical development even pronouns tend towards regularity, and if such simplification comes about very slowly in this class of words, the reason is that the extremely frequent use fixes the forms in the memory. Exactly the same thing happens with the most often used verbs, which for the same reason in all our languages are irregular (*am, is, was, be; bin, ist, sind, war; suis, est, sont, était, fut, sera; go, went; vais, aller, ira; gehe, ging, gegangen* .....); but in spite of this no interlinguist has proposed to give an irregular inflexion to the corresponding verbs in constructed languages. An exception is just as indefensible in one as in the other case. An international language can and must be less capricious and less complicated than even the most progressive national language. Hence, in Novial, just as we have *kato* and *kata* for a male and female cat, respectively, and *kate*, when no sex is to be indicated, and correspondingly *artista, artista, artiste*, etc., we have in the pronouns *lo* he, *la* she, *le* he or she (e.g. *si omne veni kande le deve, nule besona varta*, if everybody comes when he or she ("they") should, no one has to wait). Further *nule* no one, *nulo* no man, *nula* no woman; *kelke* somebody, *kelko* some man, *kelka* some woman. In the plural *les* they (generally), *los* = Fr. *eux*, *las* = Fr. *elles*, etc.

In the verbs it seems advisable to have an ending to denote past tense, as this occurs so very often, but otherwise it is in accordance with the pronounced tendency of West-European languages to make an extensive use of short auxiliaries, which may be easily combined to express all manner of complicated ideas: *me ha veni* I have come; *me had veni* I had come; *me ve* (better than *sal?*) *veni* I shall come; *lo ve ha veni* he will have come; *la vud ha veni* she would have come, etc. An indication of person and number is superfluous in the verbal form, as the subject is always there to give the necessary information in that respect.

Fortunately there exist numerous word-building elements (prefixes and suffixes) that are already known internationally and can be adopted without any change. The only thing required is to define their use and to be free to apply the same prefix or suffix to all words, whereas natural languages present all kinds of more or less inexplicable restrictions. Vague and inaccurate definitions of suffixes

should have no place in a rational language, and even less acceptable—to mention one example only—is the use of the two Latin prefixes *in* in two nearly contradictory senses as in Occidental: *inscrit* inscribed and *inscrit* unwritten (the accent is an unsatisfactory and ineffective palliative). One of the great advantages of a constructed language is the power it gives every speaker to form a word by means of a recognized suffix without having first to inquire whether it is already in use; but if radicals and suffixes are well chosen, it is possible to form any number of derivatives which will be immediately understood. Take the ending *-torie* for a place where something is done: *observatorie* (from the verb *observa*), *lavatorie*, *dormitorie*, *laboratorie*, *auditorie* (from *audi*, to hear), *manjatorie* dining-room, *gajatorie* pawnshop (*gaja* pawn), *kontrolatorie*, etc. The procedure may be extended in infinitum.

Regularity thus is one of the foremost requisites of a constructed language. But what exactly does regularity mean? It may briefly be defined as expressing the same idea, the same notion or modification of a notion, everywhere by the same means. But this principle does not carry with it the principle "similar things expressed by similar means," for that leads to uncertainty and mistakes. Let me give one example from my own language, Danish: here the two months *June* and *July* are called (as in German) *Juni* and *Juli*, but the too great similarity occasions many mishearings, obliging you to repeat what you said. Here English *June*, *July*, and French *juin*, *juillet* are much better. But in the latest philosophical language, Mr. E. P. Foster's "Ro," the names of the months are *tamab* (December), *tamad*, *tamat*—those three together form *tama* 'winter'—further *tameb* *tamed* *tamet*, etc. Similarly the days of the week are *takab*, *takad*, *takat*, *takak*, *takal*, *takam*, *takan*. Now the inevitable result of such systematization is that Ro is utterly impracticable: think of the number of mishearings over the telephone, especially as the numerals in Ro are constructed on the same principle, for a man intending to say Monday the third December will easily be thought to speak of Tuesday the fourth January, etc. In Mr. Wilbur M. Law Beatty's "Qosmiani" the numerals are *nul* (1), *dul* (2), *mul*, *bul*, *ful*, *xul*, *sul*, *gul*, *bul*—perfectly systematic, it is true, but just on that account this detail is quite sufficient to condemn the whole language. We

have seen above how national languages tend to get rid of too great similarities between names of similar things which it is often important to keep easily distinct. A smaller fault of the same kind is made in Esperanto with the words for 'right' and 'left,' *dekstre* and *maldekstre*, which in the marine would give rise to the same kind of mishearings as *starboard* and *larboard* did. So we see the importance of the principle: the same thing expressed in the same way, but not: similar things expressed by similar means.

If instead of the fantastic numerals and names of the months just mentioned we simply, like most recent constructed languages, take *un*, *du*, *tri* (known in English through *unit*, *duo*, *trio*), *januare*, *februare*, etc., and if we base our vocabulary on the lines indicated above, i.e. utilize to the utmost extent such words as *nature*, *natural*, *universe*, *universal*, *natione*, *national*, *periode*, *forme*, *literature*, *teatre*, *komedie*, *dansa*, *autore*, *historie*, *kanone*, *pistole*, *produkte*, *produktiv*, *produktione*, *akte*, *aktiv*, *aktione*, *labora*, *laborere*, *laboratorie*, *dentiste*, *dental* (whence *dente* tooth), *admira*, *admiratione*, *splendid*, *stupid*, *steril*, *sterilisa*, *simpli*, *simplifikazione*,<sup>1</sup> etc. etc.—and if we glue these words together by means of a simple grammatical apparatus, we shall be able to build up a rich and expressive language which will shock no one by its unnatural sound or look and which can be very easily acquired and used by men and women of average intelligence.

Just one little specimen to show how such a language looks in connected speech; it will present no difficulties to any educated European or American:

Kulture es ekonomie de energie in omni direktione. Li kultural valore del universal helpelingue es ke le limita li enormi disipatione de energie a kel li homaro ha es til nun submiset. Per liberisa ti energies on pove utiliza les por li kultural taskes kel li homaro non ha ankore solu, e li gano por kulture ve es non-previdablim grandi. (*li* definite article; *homaro* mankind, cp. *formularo* collection of formulas, *glosaro*, etc.; *solu* solve, cf. *solutione*; *gano* gain).

To sum up: a close study of national languages reveals the truth that everything in them is not "natural" in the strict sense; and a

<sup>1</sup> Details in spelling and endings may be open to discussion. I give the words in the form I think the best for international use.



## NATURE AND ART IN LANGUAGE

close study of the best constructed languages shows us that nearly all their elements are really just as “natural” as most of the elements of English and French. This should make us give up all the ordinary prejudices against “artificial” languages and make us understand that the introduction of a well-constructed language for international purposes will be a very great benefit indeed for the world at large.

The art of the perfect gardener is not to make artificial flowers, but to select the finest of those plants with which nature provides him, to arrange them so that they form a harmonious whole, and perhaps to produce new species by means of the same processes (crossing and mutation), that Nature herself employs. This also describes the task of the interlinguist, who may finally quote two profound utterances of two great poets.

Goethe says:

Natur und kunst, sie schienen sich zu fliehen,  
Und haben sich, eh' man es denkt, gefunden.

(Nature and art seemed to shun one another, and look! they have met unexpectedly.)

And Shakespeare:

Yet nature is made better by no mean,  
But nature makes that mean: so, over that art  
Which you say adds to nature, is an art  
That nature makes . . . .

This is an art  
 Which does make nature, change it rather, but  
 The art itself is nature.

- - *Linguistica*, 1933.

## INTRODUCTION, AN INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE

THIS book is to be a plea for an artificial international auxiliary language, and it will be well at the outset to see what is implied in these adjectives. *Artificial*, i.e. made consciously by one man or a group of men, in contradistinction to such natural languages as English, French, etc., which have been spoken for generations and whose development has chiefly taken place without the individuals being conscious of any changes. But the term "artificial" is apt to create a prejudice against the language we are to deal with, and it will be my business in this book to show how very "natural" such a language may be; I shall therefore prefer to speak of a *constructed* language, and instead of terming the existing languages natural I shall use the more appropriate term *national* languages.

The next adjective was *international*. That is to say that the language is meant to be used not by any one nation or in any one country, but by individuals who though belonging to different nationalities have something they want to communicate to one another.

Third: *auxiliary*. This implies that our international language is meant to be only a sort of substitute for national languages whenever these are not capable of serving as means of communication. It is not intended that a new language should supplant the existing languages: no one in his sober senses would think it possible to make all nations forget their own languages and agree on one single substitute for all purposes. But what a great many sensible men and women in many countries do think worth working for, is a state of things in which an educated Englishman when meeting an educated Spaniard or Dutchman or Bulgarian would be pretty certain to be understood if he addressed him in a constructed language adopted for that purpose—a state of things also in which international conferences and

congresses on political or scientific or commercial questions would be carried on freely without need of interpreters, and all official documents relating to more than one state would be circulated in a single language.

What then we interlinguists are thinking of, is not what Schleyer made the boasting motto of his Volapük, "Menade bal, püki bal" (To one human race, one language), but rather what another invento. of an artificial language, Bollack, took as his motto: The second language to everybody. The new interlanguage would not infringe the sacred rights of the mother-tongue, but be used only when two or more persons ignorant of one another's language had occasion to talk or to write to one another.<sup>1</sup>

#### NEED FOR AN INTERLANGUAGE.

An American may travel from Boston to San Francisco without hearing more than one language. But if he were to traverse the same distance on this side of the Atlantic, he would have a totally different story to tell. Suppose he started from Oslo and journeyed to the South or South-East: he would then hear perhaps Norwegian, Swedish, Danish, German, Czecho-Slovakian, Hungarian, Rumanian, Bulgarian, Turkish, Greek, and then in Egypt Arabic and a little English—twelve different languages, of which the majority would be utterly unintelligible to him. And yet he would not have heard half of the languages spoken in Europe. The curse of Babel is still with us. How many people have been in situations where they have felt the barriers of language a serious drawback, where they have been desirous to communicate freely with someone, ask questions, obtain or impart information, etc., which has been rendered impossible by their own and the other party's want of sufficient linguistic knowledge! It is not very pleasant to be engaged in a discussion that interests you, if you feel that while you

<sup>1</sup> In this book I often use the abbreviation I.A.L. for International Auxiliary Language, also sometimes I.L.

have the best arguments the other man has the whip hand of you, because the conversation is in *his* native language, in which you are able to express only what you can, while he can say everything he wants to. In scientific congresses, as Professor Pfaundler says, "only very few can take part in the discussions, and many must be well content if they are able to understand the usually rapidly delivered papers. Many an important criticism is not made because one does not possess the ability to discuss a question in a foreign language, and does not wish to expose oneself to the chance of a rebuff, caused not so much by ignorance of the matter in hand as by want of facility in expression. Every member of a congress has noticed that whenever the language employed in the papers changes, a considerable number of the audience leave with more or less noise, in order to avoid being compelled to listen to a paper which they do not understand."

Sometimes in international discussions the three chief languages are allowed, and each separate speech has to be translated into the two others. I was present at such a congress in Copenhagen in 1910 and saw how intolerable this dragging repetition must necessarily be, not least to those who like myself understood English, French and German with perfect ease: anything like a real vivid discussion was excluded by the inevitable delays—not to mention the inadequacy of many of the extempore translations.

With regard to printed works matters are somewhat better, but not quite satisfactory. Most scientific men are nowadays able to read books and papers on their own special subject in the three chief languages, English, German and French; but that is no longer sufficient. One of the most important features of the last hundred years is the nationality-movement, in politics, in literature, in art, in everything. Even small nations want to assert themselves and fly their own colours on every occasion, by way of showing their independence of their mightier neighbours. The growing improvement in higher educa-

tion everywhere has fortunately made it possible to print books on scientific matters even in languages spoken by comparatively small nations. But what is a benefit to these countries themselves, may in some cases be detrimental to the world at large, and even to authors, in so far as thoughts that deserved diffusion all over the globe are now made accessible merely to a small fraction of those that should be interested in them. In my own field, I have had occasion to see the way in which excellent work written in Danish which might have exerted a deep influence on contemporary linguistic thought has remained practically unknown outside of Scandinavia. (See my book *Language* under Rask and Bredsdorff; I might have mentioned Westergaard and Thomsen as well.) The late secretary of the Berlin Academy, the eminent classical scholar H. Diels, says: "Incalculable are the intellectual losses incurred every year in consequence of the national hobby of small, but highly gifted and scientifically active peoples who insist that scientific works (which cannot all of them be translated) should appear in their own, narrowly circumscribed languages." For my own part, though I have spent most of my life studying different languages, I have sometimes been obliged to lay aside as unread books and papers which I should have liked very much to study, but which happened to be written in a tongue with which I was not sufficiently familiar.

#### IGNORANCE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES.

Kant was first made known to Edinburgh in 1803 not in the German original, but through a French translation. John Stuart Mill was able, though with difficulty, to read German, but preferred reading translations, and never learnt to shift for himself in a German railway station. When Carlyle met Louis Blanc, "it was the veriest fun to watch their conversation. Carlyle's French was a literal translation of his own untranslatable English, uttered too in his own broad Scotch. Louis

Blanc could not at all understand him, but would listen attentively, and then answer very wide of the mark." (Car. Fox.) Faraday knew no German, and consequently Robert Mayer's and Helmholtz's investigations were a "sealed book" to him. "How different," said Dean Stanley, "might have been the case of the Church of England if Newman had been able to read German." When a German scholar sent an annotated edition of *Macbeth* to Dr. Furnivall, the director of the New Shakespeare Society, the Early English Text Society, etc., the latter wrote back to regret that he could not read the notes, but that he saw from the figures that the author had gone into metrical questions. When Zola fled from France during the Dreyfus troubles, he was utterly unable to make himself understood in English. And the same was the case with the Danish poet Herman Bang, who died miserably in America in 1912 unable to make his simplest wants understood by those about him.

Nor is a similar inability unknown among statesmen. It is said that it was injurious to Denmark in her difficult political situation in the middle of the last century, that Madvig (the great Latin scholar) and other ministers spoke French with difficulty and felt shy of talking bad French to the foreign ambassadors. Similar things are reported from the World War. Sir Edward Grey could not speak French, and the French ambassador, Cambon, spoke bad English. None of the French or English generals, with the exception of Lord Kitchener, spoke the other nation's language at all well, and at the Peace Conference Clemenceau gained an undue ascendancy because he was practically the only one who had complete command of both languages. It requires no unusual amount of wisdom to understand that confidential talks between mighty statesmen of different nationalities on topics of world-wide importance lose a great deal if they have to be carried on by means of interpreters: how much better if the mighty of this earth were able to meet on an equal footing linguistically speaking - but that could only be possible by means of a perfectly

neutral language.

It is true that we have translators and interpreters, but good and efficient translators are neither plentiful nor very cheap. I take from Miss Pankhurst's book the bit of information that during 1926 the Geneva staff of the League of Nations included 29 translators and interpreters at salaries amounting to £19,800—besides shorthand writers and typists. And then, the League is only a modest beginning of that vast political organization of the whole world which has to come in a not too distant future!

In these days of cheap travel, of commercial interchange between all parts of the world, of airplanes and broadcasting, of international science and of world-politics, it seems an urgent need for merchants, technical men, scientists, literary men, politicians, in fact for everybody, to have an easy means of getting into touch with foreigners and of learning more from them than is possible by visiting other countries as tongue-tied tourists. The word "international" was only invented by Jeremy Bentham in 1780—nowadays we have come to the point of needing an international language.

Let me mention here also the recent invention of the speaking film, which is now being brought to a rare technical perfection. When Axel Petersen and Arnold Poulsen's "phono-film" was shown to a small audience in Copenhagen, my thought leapt out to the time when by this means it would be possible to have plays and speeches made visible and audible and comprehensible all over the world—the advantages of cinema and radio combined and made still more useful by means of an Interlanguage!

#### AN EXISTING LANGUAGE?

A great many people will stop here and say: yes, we grant that it would be desirable to have one single language used everywhere, but would it not be best to select one of the existing languages and use that in all

communications between two or more nations, even if no one of those concerned knew that language as his own mother-tongue? The answer is that a deliberate choice of any one language for such a purpose would meet with unsurmountable difficulties on account of international jealousies. Frenchmen and Germans alike would fight tooth and nail against a proposal to make English a universally recognized international language, Frenchmen and Englishmen against German, etc.—and quite naturally too, for such a choice would mean an enormous handicapping of all other nations. Nor would it be possible to make all nations agree on the selection of the language of a smaller nation: visionaries have, as a matter of fact, proposed Norwegian and Armenian! It would require a good deal of compulsion to make people all over the world take up the study of either of these languages, and to the nation thus put in the linguistically most-favoured position it would be a doubtful boon to see its beloved tongue mutilated and trampled under foot everywhere, as would inevitably be the result.

One day, when I was discussing these matters with a famous Belgian historian and complaining of the difficulty felt by men of science who happened to be born in a small country, he said: Instead of writing in an artificial language, it will be much better for you Danes to write in French; if the matter is good enough, we shall read it with pleasure, even if it be bad French. I replied that no one can help being to some extent irritated to read his own language disfigured by faults in grammar and phraseology, and that a Dane would find it much easier to learn to write Ido (or now Novial) perfectly than to learn to write even very faulty French; he would be spared that unpleasant feeling of inferiority which he must always have when trying to write a serious book or paper in a foreign national language.

#### LATIN?

Latin was for centuries the international tongue of the



higher intellectual world, and it is still used extensively in the Roman Catholic Church: why not then revive it for all purposes? It would certainly have the advantage of being neutral and thus avoid the objections just mentioned. To those few scholars who dream of this rôle for Latin the reply is obvious: Latin has had that position, and has lost it irrevocably in consequence of the natural development of the last three centuries or more. Even classical scholars use Latin very little nowadays in their scientific papers. And outside their narrow circles very few people are now able to read, still less to speak or write, Latin in spite of the great number of hours devoted to that language in many schools. How many scientists would now be able to read Newton's or Tycho Brahe's works in the original? And how many are there who read even such excellent works as Erasmus's *Encomium Moriae* or Holberg's *Nicolaus Climius* in Latin? When it comes to expressing the ideas of our own day, the deficiencies of classical Latin appear with ruthless clarity: telephones and motor-cars and wireless have no room in Ciceronian Latin, and it will be of little use to coin Neolatin words for these and other modern inventions, for the whole structure of the language with its intricate forms and complex syntax, which tempts the writer to twisted sentences, has become so utterly antiquated that we of the twentieth century wince at the idea of having to clothe our thoughts in that garb.

Recently G. de Reynold in two remarkable articles (in the *Revue de Genève*, May and June 1925)—after a scathing criticism of the barbarisms of Esperanto and after a condemnation of the idea of an artificial language, which in my view is exaggerated and unjust—brought forward the proposal to use as an international language not classical Latin, but the Latin of the Middle Ages, with its simplified sentence constructions (*quod* instead of infinite clauses, etc.) and even further modernizations: he thinks it will be easy for a conference of philologists and experts of all countries to agree on a system for adapting Latin forms and phraseology to contemporary

uses. This is to my mind much more Utopian than such a scheme as that advocated below: for where is such a conference to begin, and where to end? Irregular verbs? I think most lovers of Latin will object to a simplification of *sum*, *es*, *est*, and where are we to draw the line in the use of the subjunctive and the ablative, etc. etc.? Further as to the meanings and uses of words: is *bellum classium* to mean naval warfare or war of the classes in the modern sense? *Redactio*, *sociologia*, *eventualitas*, *fixatio*, *realismus*, *radicalismus*, *jurista*, *vegetarianus* and similar coinages would, of course, have to be admitted in spite of the protests of classicists, but what is to be done with *radium* and *radio*, not as case forms of *radius*, but as independent words? Hundreds of similar questions would inevitably arise, and the conference would probably split up into small groups representing the most diverging stand-points—some advocating the Latin of the Vulgate, others that of Erasmus, while some would simplify inflexions in a few points and others in a great many more, even down to partisans of Peano's *Latino sine flexione*, which in the eyes of not a few scholars is a barbarous profanation of the Latin they love, and which is evidently very far from de Reynold's idea. Even after a repeated reading of his eloquent plea I cannot help looking on Latin as irretrievably dead, at any rate for our purposes, which should cover the interests not only of scholars, but also of merchants, technicians, politicians and other men of the practical world. It is no use saying that Latin culture and through it the Latin language has pervaded and is pervading modern life in thousands of ways: no one denies that, and therefore great parts of the Latin language must necessarily be incorporated in our Interlanguage of the future—but only those parts which have proved their vitality by surviving in the languages actually now spoken—that is the test of what we can use and what not.

The decisive reason, however, why we must oppose the adoption of one of the existing languages, living or dead, is that each of them is several times more difficult

than a constructed language need be and than those constructed languages are already which have any chance of being selected; while in Part II I shall try to show that it is possible in some respects to go further in simplification than most of the proposed artificial languages have gone. It will now be our task to consider those objections which are constantly raised against the idea of a constructed language and to show that they are far from being conclusive.

### OBJECTIONS TO CONSTRUCTED LANGUAGES.

Objections are raised both by professional philologists (linguists) and by laymen. Among the former I must here specially mention the two leaders of German comparative linguistics, Brugmann and Leskien, but their attacks were made at the time when Esperanto was beginning to gain favour, and later languages have avoided not a few of the imperfections found fault with by the two Leipzig professors. In 1925 Professor G. Guntert in his *Grundfragen der Sprachwissenschaft* tried to reduce the whole idea *ad absurdum*, but on the basis of so deficient a knowledge of the facts of the case and with so prejudiced a mind that he proved less than nothing. It would be a very great mistake to suppose that professional philologists as a body are against constructed languages; it would be much more correct to say that those among them who have gone most into the question are the best disposed to them. I may mention here among those who have spoken in favour of the idea *in abstracto*, Schuchardt, Villh. Thomsen and Meillet—three of the greatest stars in the philological world—and among those who have actually taken part in the International Language Movement, Baudouin de Courtenay, Ernst Kock, Wallenskold, Collinson and Sapir, all of them university professors.

People who hear about constructed languages will often say that such a language must be as lifeless as a

dead herring, and that we may just as well think of setting up an homunculus made in a chemical retort and claiming for it the qualities of a living human being. Languages are not organisms, and their "life" is not to be compared with that of animals or plants. Forty years ago Schuchardt was able to make short work of this objection by showing how much in the so-called natural languages was really artificial, that is, due to conscious endeavours and conscious selection, and yet was just as capable of "living" as anything else. What we have to do is to study existing languages and their history so as to find out the actual laws of their development and then build on what has most vitality.

#### DIFFERENCES IN AN INTERLANGUAGE.

A further objection is this: such a language can never be exactly alike in the mouths of all who use it; there will always be a good many divergencies and differences. But could not the same thing be said of any existing language? English is spoken in many ways, differing according to localities and to classes and sets of people. What is essential in one as well as in the other case is that there should be so much practical agreement that mutual understanding is possible—and as a matter of fact that has been attained in the case of more than one constructed language.

"An Englishman and a Frenchman will never be able to pronounce the same words in the same way." In this form the statement is not exact: modern practical language-teaching on the basis of phonetics has shown possibilities in this direction which former times could not suspect; but further, phonetic schooling and training is needed to a far less extent in the case of a constructed language than when it is a question of teaching a foreign national language, with its many fine nuances which it is necessary to know and to observe if one wants to have a good pronunciation, and on which we must therefore at present insist in our schools. The phonetic system of a constructed

language should be very simple indeed—and is so in the case of all recent schemes. Volapük had German *ü* and *ö*, which are easy enough for a Frenchman and a Scandinavian, but not for an Englishman, a Spaniard or a Russian, though a few hours' training after a phonetic explanation will suffice to enable anyone to pronounce these sounds; but Esperanto and several other constructed languages have shown how easy it is to dispense with these vowels so as to have only the five vowels *a, e, i, o, u* (pronounced in the continental way): sounds which no nation finds difficult. Similarly with consonants: if the language is really constructed on a sensible plan, a sufficient degree of phonetic agreement can easily be obtained even among people who start from such different sound-systems as French and English. It must be remembered that the fewer the distinctive sounds (the "phonemes") which one has in a language, the wider the margin of correctness which can be allowed to each sound without its infringing on the domain of its neighbour, and thus running the risk of a word being misheard for another.

But we need not linger over theoretical considerations: the practical experiences of Volapükists, Esperantists and Idists in their congresses and informal meetings have shown every participant that the fears of sceptics are groundless with regard to pronunciation. "*Ab esse ad posse valet consequentia*": when one has actually seen a thing, one cannot any longer doubt that it is possible. As for myself, I was present at a meeting of the Philological Society of London in 1887, at a time when I was an utter disbeliever in artificial languages, and there I heard an Englishman and a German speaking Volapük and understanding one another perfectly in that curious tongue. Later I have heard Esperanto and Ido spoken by people of a great many nationalities and have been able as a phonetician to observe the ease with which they were able to converse with one another on various topics. It should also be remembered that as an interlanguage is chiefly spoken when men or women from different

countries meet, they will naturally tend to rub off the peculiarities of their national pronunciations. This was the experience related by a French Idist after a visit to English Idists: "During the first sentences there was an appreciable difference between our pronunciations; but gradually and pretty rapidly, on account of the very necessity of making ourselves understood, each of us adapted himself to the other, my English host giving a clearer enunciation to all syllables, and myself paying more attention to stress than when I am talking Ido with my countrymen. After some moments, we struck, as it were, the same middle note" (*Progreso*, 4.429). I am perfectly sure that a similar mutual adaptation has taken place very often, and will take place again whenever interlinguists meet together from various countries with the sincere wish of getting full benefit from the conversation. The more such a language is spoken at international gatherings, the more will everybody's pronunciation quite naturally approach the ideal average.

It will further be said that there are difficulties arising from the form-system of any constructed language, which people with different morphologies in their own language will not be able to overcome. If the interlanguage distinguishes four cases, as Volapük did on account of the idiosyncrasies of its German inventor, Englishmen will constantly stumble at these rules. Quite so; therefore recent schemes avoid such complications. Nothing can be concluded from imperfect schemes, except just this, that we must make the interlanguage of the future more perfect, i.e. simpler. Volapük made the error of having four cases; Esperanto made a similar, though lesser, mistake with its compulsory accusative, used not only for the direct object, but also without preposition to indicate the place to (or towards) which. The simpler the morphological structure is, the less inducement will there be to make grammatical mistakes from a recollection of the grammatical rules of one's native language. But that simplicity does not mean that the language we construct is to be a kind of "Pidgin"

incapable of expressing nuances of thought which are necessary to highly cultivated Europeans. I have devoted a long chapter of my book *Language* to a study of Pidgin English, Beach-la-Mar and similar exotic minimum-languages or makeshift-languages, so I speak with some knowledge of the matter when I say that the interlanguage I am advocating in this book is totally different from such languages through being expressive and efficient, though extremely simple in its grammatical structure.

The following objection is found in various forms even in quite recent articles, and it cannot be denied that it carries a certain weight. Everybody will necessarily transfer some of his speech-habits to the international language, which will thus be coloured differently—in word order, phraseology, etc.—according to the native language underlying each user's way of thinking. There is, however, not so much in that objection as one might imagine beforehand, and here, too, we have already a good deal of experience gathered through practical work with various interlanguages. As a matter of fact a great many people have learnt how to express their thoughts in a constructed language in such a fashion as to be easily understood by people starting from very different national languages. Personally I have read articles and received letters, chiefly in Ido, but also in Esperanto and Occidental, written from not a few countries, Russia, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Hungary, etc., and expressed so accurately that I could hardly detect a single trace of the writers' nationality, though I do not deny that some correspondents lacked this power of effacing their mother-tongue. Some Russians will feel inclined to use *sua* instead of *mea*, when the subject of the sentence is "me," etc. No language, not even a simple interlanguage, can be learnt without some instruction, either through the mouth of a teacher, or through a book, or through both; and it must be the chief and foremost task of an instructor to warn his pupils against those idiomatic turns and expressions which cannot be easily understood abroad. It requires very little linguistic knowledge on the part

of an Englishman to understand that he should avoid translating phrases like "put up with," "how do you do?" "go in for," etc., word for word into any foreign language. "Take place" means something different from "platz nehmen." During the war a German paper was indignant and took it as a sign of the cruelty of English girls that one had written to her "young man" the following threat: "I will cut you dead unless you enlist at once"; the German translated: "Ich will dich zerhacken," and took it literally!

The all-important rule in dealing with an interlanguage must always be not to translate word for word from one's native language, but to render the thought itself in its simplest form. This of course requires some mental discipline and amounts to saying that a constructed language cannot be expected to fulfil all the functions and uses to which a national language can be put. It must necessarily remain an intellectual language, a language for the brain, not for the heart; it can never expect to give expression to those deep emotions which find their natural outlet through a national language. There will always be something dry and prosaic about it, and it is a mistake to try to translate very deep poetry in it, for it will be capable of rendering only those elements of poetry which might as well have been expressed through a paraphrase in native prose. But all this does not hinder a constructed language from being eminently useful in very many practical affairs of the utmost importance. This leads us to the following consideration.

#### NOT SO GOOD AS EXISTING LANGUAGES.

An objection<sup>1</sup> which is often raised against constructed languages is that they can never be as good as natural languages. It is true that our interlanguage is not as rich as English, not as elegant as French, not as vigorous as German, not as beautiful as Italian, not as full of nuances

<sup>1</sup> This and the following paragraphs are a translation of the Novial text found below among Specimens



as Russian, not as "homelike" as our mother-tongue. But note this well, that all these good qualities, which one appreciates and praises in the national languages, are found only when they are spoken or written by natives. And the Interlanguage may very easily be richer than the English spoken by a Frenchman, more elegant than French as spoken by a Dane, more vigorous than the German of some Italians, more beautiful than the Italian of the English, more full of nuances than the Russian of Germans, and more homelike than my own tongue spoken by Russians. And as our language is an auxiliary language, it can only be compared fairly with natural languages as usually spoken by foreigners; and then neither Ido nor Novial need feel ashamed of itself.

#### FUTURE DIFFERENTIATIONS.

From linguists (philologists) and others one very often hears the following objection: even if all inhabitants of the earth learnt one and the same language, the unity would soon disappear, and different languages would arise in the same way as the Romanic languages were produced by the splitting up of Latin.

Against this objection I have two critical remarks: in the first place, the argument from linguistic history is not sound; and secondly, if it were, that should not hinder us from working for an international language.

It is quite true that the history of languages often shows us a tendency to differentiation: it is well known that most European languages have taken their origin from one and the same language. But the tendency towards differentiation is in no way inevitable. Those who believe that a language must everywhere and always break up into a number of dialects forget the most important law of linguistic biology, namely that constant intercourse creates linguistic unity, even where it did not exist, and that discontinuance of intercourse produces linguistic differences where there was once unity.

If after the colonization of Iceland the Icelandic tongue came to be different from Norwegian, this was due to the cessation of constant communication, and if nowadays the speech of California is in perfect agreement in all essential points with that of Boston, this is due to the fact that the inhabitants of the western and eastern parts of America are in very active intercourse with one another. Antiquity witnessed many cases of differentiation of languages; we nowadays see more of the reverse process—dialects are everywhere disappearing, and unity is constantly increasing: an ever-growing number of people speaking the great national unity-languages. Thus the only condition under which an international language once adopted would split up into different languages, would be the want of constant intercourse; if for example a colony of Novialists (or Esperantists) emigrated to a previously uninhabited island, and lived there entirely isolated from the rest of the world. But such a supposition is evidently absurd, and we must insist that as long as an interlanguage continues to be used in its true function as an aid to intercourse between different countries, there is no danger that it will suffer the fate that befell Latin, when that language was split up into the Romanic languages.

Even if we admit for a moment the possibility and probability of such a differentiation, this ought not to deter us from working for an international language and speaking it. Those who think that any language must by a natural law necessarily and fatally differentiate, will nevertheless speak their mother-tongue every day without being afraid that in accordance with that fatal law it will split up under their hands. And this is quite natural, for such a differentiation is not a matter of a moment; it will take some time, even a long time, and we may confidently assert that it will not take place during our lives. We can thus say: After us the deluge! But, as I have already said, I do not believe that even after us the dreaded linguistic deluge will take place.

## AN INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE

### NUMBER OF PROPOSED LANGUAGES.

A criticism which is much more serious in its consequences is this: people will never agree on one single artificial language to be used everywhere. A great many interlanguages have been proposed, and new ones spring up on all sides. One of these may be just as good as another, and if some have had a certain vogue and have gathered a troop of adherents, this success has in each case been only temporary, so that each new scheme must be prepared to share the fate of Volapük, which had its heyday of triumph forty years ago and is now totally forgotten.

This objection would certainly be decisive, if the construction of an interlanguage were entirely arbitrary and dependent on an inventor's fancy, and if, on the other hand, the choice between various schemes depended exclusively on the public's whimsical preferences. But fortunately neither of these premises is correct, as we shall see when we cast a glance at the history of the international language movement, and more particularly at its most recent phases.

*—An International Language, 1928*

## HISTORY OF OUR LANGUAGE<sup>1</sup>

In June 1907 the Delegation for the adoption of an international auxiliary language in accordance with its statutes elected a committee which had to decide which artificial language was the most suitable to be introduced in international communications.

The counting of the voting papers was managed by the well known French General Sebert. In October of the same year the committee thus elected met in Paris where altogether 18 long and fatiguing sittings took place. Not all those who were elected came ; some had availed themselves of the right granted them by the statutes to send a deputy with power to act for them. The members who attended had the following native languages : French, German, English, Danish, Italian, Polish (Russian). The following sciences were represented : Philology, Astronomy, Mathematics, Chemistry, Medicine, Philosophy.

As Honorary President was elected the astronomer Förster of Berlin, who however was able to take part in only a few sessions ; as President the Chemist Prof. Ostwald of Leipzig (Nobel Prizeman) ; as Vice Presidents the two professors of

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<sup>1</sup> Translated from Ido by Gilbert H. Richardson.

Philology Baudouin de Courtenay of St. Petersburg and myself. Besides the linguists just mentioned the following took part in the discussions with the greatest zeal and persistence: the Secretary Prof. Couturat of Paris, Rector Boirac of Dijon (President of the Esperantist "Lingva Komitato"), his deputy Mr. Gaston Moch (who was also allowed to take part in the sessions at which Mr. Boirac himself was able to be present), Mr. P. Hugon (representative of W. T. Stead) and the mathematician Prof. Peano of Turin. The discussions were conducted almost all the time in French; sometimes however Prof. Baudouin de Courtenay preferred to speak German, and once or twice Mr. Peano spoke in his "Latina sen flexiono." The discussions on Mr. Spitzer's "Parla" (see below) were at his desire conducted wholly in German. The debates were directed with eminent ability by Prof. Ostwald, who was able to prevent too strong a display of feeling, and who by his special synthetically philosophical talent had a remarkable capacity for seizing the principles and the great main view-points and of preventing the debates getting lost in details.

Before the sessions in Paris a very important work had been done. Messrs. Couturat and Leau already in 1903 in "A History of the Universal Language" ("**Histoire de la langue universelle**") had given a critical resumé of the systems of artificial language which had till then appeared, and supplemented it in 1907 by "The new international languages" ("**Les nouvelles**

**langues internationales.”)** We received a great many books and pamphlets about all the most important languages proposed, and further many letters from inventors, advocates and opponents. The letters addressed to the Delegation as such and not to individual members of the Committee had been summarised and analysed by the secretaries in a fairly large type-written pamphlet **which we received about one month before we met; this pamphlet also contained a critical article on the position of the problem as it then was, which was afterwards printed under the title of Conclusions of the Report (“Conclusions du rapport.”)** During the conference also came letters, **among others from the eminent English linguist Sweet, from Dr. Zamenhof, from the head of the Neutralists Rosenberger.** Thus we had no little material to consider and furthermore several unpublished systems were submitted to us for examination.

The inventors of language systems had been invited to attend either in person or by representative to defend their systems. This offer was availed of by Dr. Nicolas (Spokil), Mr. Spitzer (Parla) and Mr. Bollack (La langue bleue); moreover Dr. Zamenhof got himself represented by Mr. de Beaufront, who had been propagating Esperanto for many years; and almost as representative of Neutral came Mr. Monseur, professor of comparative philology in Brussels: yet his plea had the character less of a positive defence of Neutral than of a zealous and expert insistance on the weaknesses of Esperanto. Of the

discussions with those outside the committee two episodes deserve special mention: Dr. Nicolas emphasised as an advantage of his system founded on "a priori" principles, that it was constructed in accordance with a firm grasp of the laws of mnemonics and therefore was especially easy to remember. Yet he was almost offended when I wished to begin examining him about his own dictionary, and so it appeared that he could not remember the words which he himself had made. Mr. Bollack in a very eloquent discourse presented his "Langue bleue" for the diffusion of which he had devoted a great deal of money; he ended by declaring that altho' he wished naturally that his language should be adopted, he would nevertheless accept the verdict of the committee of experts if it went otherwise; this promise he has kept loyally by being now an eminent member of the Ido organization in Paris.

In the course of the discussions it soon became evident that not a single member of the committee was prepared to accept a language of the a priori type containing words chosen arbitrarily, but that everyone was in favour of making the fullest use of the elements which were already international in the natural languages. The choice was therefore restricted to languages of the group whose best known representatives are Esperanto, Neutral, Novlatin, and Universal, which may be considered in many respects as varieties of the same linguistic type. The first two especially as the best elaborated and thought out languages played the principal part in the debate, and the

advantages of each were compared with the other. In favor of Neutral was the natural alphabet without circumflexed letters, which Esperanto alone of the hundred or so artificial languages dared to offer to the world; furthermore the more natural selection of the words in many cases, especially in the pronouns, where the a priori and quite artificial contrivance of Esperanto was strongly criticised. On the other hand in Esperanto more had been done to prevent ambiguities; the frequently crude and ungraceful word-forms of Neutral have been avoided, and by using everywhere different terminations in the different parts of speech it is managed that any one who has once learnt that easy system can quickly and with certainty find his bearings in the phrases so that clear understanding results; at the same time the many final vowels give euphony and render the pronunciation more easy to all the many nations whose languages but rarely have consonants at the ends of words.

There was a very detailed discussion on the principles of internationality in the choice of words, on the formation of words (derivation) and on unambiguity. With regard to the first the idea was approved which I proposed in "**Tilskueren**" in 1905, that internationality ought not to be measured by the number of languages in which the word occurs, but by the number of people who through their native language are acquainted with it. The discussion on word-formation was directed mainly to the dissertation which Mr. Couturat had published a short time



before “**Étude sur la dérivation en Éspéranto**”; its principles were defended with success by Mr. Couturat against Mr. Boirac who maintained the superiority of Zamenhof’s principle.

During the last sessions the centre of the discussions was the anonymous Ido-project, which was brought forward by Mr. Couturat on behalf of the author; none of the members of the committee knew anything about the author other than the negative, that it was due neither to Couturat, Leau, nor to any member of the committee itself. It was a kind of Esperanto in which regard had been paid to the objections which had been made already before then from many quarters to the language of Zamenhof; and thus it exhibited in many points the desired mean between Esperanto and Neutral. Yet this project on being examined in detail was not approved in all particulars, neither concerning grammar, nor concerning the choice of words; and that language which was never published consequently differs in many points from what is now known under the name of Ido. (This fact is worth remembering, because many objections directed against the great changeableness of the Delegation’s language are based on the difference between the project and the final language, although it is clearly not just so to introduce into the debate an unpublished rough draft.)

As it was evidently impossible to thrash out thoroughly and decide on all the innumerable small details we united in choosing a smaller subcommittee for that work, and after that

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we adopted unanimously (therefore also with the votes of the Esperantists) the following declaration : " None of the existing languages can be adopted in its entirety and without changes, but the Committee decide in principle to adopt Esperanto because of its relative perfection and because of the large use of many kinds which has already been made of it, but with the reservation of several changes to be carried out by the Permanent Commission (i.e. the above mentioned sub-committee) in the direction indicated by the conclusion of the secretaries' report and by the project called Ido, and if possible in agreement with the Esperantist language committee."

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Out of regard for the collaboration with the Esperantist committee it was decided that this decision should not be published for the time being. From a competent quarter we had been given good hope that the " Lingva Komitato " would easily be able to agree with us on everything essential, and we separated on October 24th confident that all friends of the idea of a world-language would soon successfully rally around the reformed Esperanto.

But it soon began to appear that there existed in the Esperanto world elements very hostile to this collaboration. Dr. Zamenhof, who several times had declared that he would submit if a competent scientific committee were to change his language " out of recognition "—Dr. Zamenhof, who himself in

1894 had proposed extremely radical changes in Esperanto (of which changes several agree with those which we carried out)—who twice over as recently as 1906 proposed changes which were not published by the Esperantists (among them I mention **-e** instead of **-au**, avoidance of the plural termination **-j**, **bona patró** instead of **bonaj patroj**, **e** instead of **kaj**, **kom** instead of **kiel**, **Anglio** instead of **Anglujo**, **breva** instead of **mallonga**, **mem** instead of **malpli**, **sub** instead of **malsupren**)—Dr. Zamenhof, who even after the close of our sessions had sent us some small proposals for reform in his language—this same Dr. Zamenhof now suddenly in January 1908 broke off all discussion with us, declared that the Delegation altogether “did not exist” for him, and from that time on he maintains the rigid unchanged Esperanto without removing any of the defects which practitioners and theorists alike had pointed out.

The chief Esperanto reviews opposed the new language partly by systematic silence as to its real nature, avoiding discussions on the real (linguistic) questions, partly by a series of personal attacks. (The Danish Esperanto Review has long been an honorable exception to these tactics).

The personal attacks were concentrated mainly around Mr. L. de Beaufront especially after it became known that he had been the author of the anonymous Ido project at the same time as he represented Dr. Zamenhof before the committee. Here I intend neither to defend nor to condemn the moral aspect of

his conduct ; for me as for the rest of the members of the Committee the purely objective question as to the essential qualities of the language to be adopted was always the only one which could be decisive ; and our final result absolutely could not have been different, even if Dr. Zamenhof himself had been present in person before us. We were all very well acquainted with Esperanto, which moreover was strongly represented in our sessions, among others by Rector Boirac ; any partiality against Esperanto cannot be alleged. It is to be regretted that no shorthand reporter was present to record all our discussions in Paris : if there had existed an official shorthand report, then according to my firm conviction the vast majority of the attacks both against de Beaufront and against the whole Committee would have fallen away to nothing and without effect. Then it would have been seen that nothing in our conversations need fear publication, but that they were serious, solid, objective discussions between competent persons, who had no other end in view than to get to know the truth. Fortunately also the great majority of the members of the committee stood high above any sort of suspicion.

It has very often been said that we were only to choose among the systems already in existence, but that we exceeded our competence in carrying out or proposing changes in one of them ; but to this we may reply : our right to do this was acknowledged indirectly by Dr. Zamenhof when he begged us urgently not to

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make serious changes in Esperanto, and directly by the adherents of Neutral and other systems. No one would have contested our right to adopt Neutral with the reservation of many changes, by which that language was assimilated somewhat to Esperanto, and the final result would then have been just the same as the present language. If we preferred definitely to mention Esperanto as the basis which was adopted in an altered form, that was done out of regard for the Esperantists in thanks for their important work in making the idea of world language known and popular, and not for any other cause whatever.

After the rupture we labored with zeal to perfect the dictionaries and the grammar; they were published in the spring of 1908, the former with a preface by me which gave an outline of the theoretical basis of the language. Therein I formulated for the first time the principle which has often been referred to since with approval: "The best auxiliary international language is that which in all points offers the greatest ease to the greatest number of people."

Almost at the same time in accordance with the proposal of Ostwald and with a programme approved by him and by the other members of the committee there was started the review "Progreso." In it were discussed freely and from many points of view the principles and details of our language; and it soon became apparent that what was most objected to by the greatest number of critics from many countries, was words and forms of Esperanto,

which we had left remaining, sometimes against our own principles. After a Union of the friends of international language was formed, the members of it elected an Academy to decide on the linguistic questions that had been discussed in Progreso, and this academy during the past years has improved the language in many points, so that now very little work remains, if you leave out the selection of words for quite special and technical conceptions. Many partisans of Ido from many countries have helped to bring out a language which in almost all respects is truly excellent: among the most important and laborious collaborators I wish to mention our indefatigable secretary and editor L. Couturat in Paris, Paul de Jankó in Constantinople, and Birger Jönson in Copenhagen. It is very important to emphasise the fact that the present language Ido is not the product of the work of one individual, but the resultant of the efforts of many years and of many persons to produce a language as easy, clear and rich as possible—a language which both scientists and men of action can with confidence recommend for the fullest use in all international relations.

—*Two Papers on International Language in English and Ido, 1921.*



## ARTIFICIAL LANGUAGES AFTER THE WORLD-WAR <sup>1</sup>

### I.

When, after the end of the war, the whole relationship between the nations as it was before 1914 is renewed, —and it will be renewed, just simply because the nations can't do without each other—then the question of a world-language, or let us rather say of an art-made means of communication between the peoples, will again become a burning one. It was well on the way to being solved when the catastrophe occurred and seemed for a short time to paralyse all such efforts. To stop them altogether, that even the world war could not do, for in spite of censorship and in spite of the nations' mutual hatred and suspicion the idea of an auxiliary language is not dead, but has its enthusiastic adherents, who have firm faith in its realization and hope that immediately after the coming of peace it will have new vitality. Quite recently I received very many evidences of this from Germany, Sweden, Norway, Austria, Switzerland, Turkey, U.S.A., and not least from England, where—from

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<sup>1</sup> Translated into Ido from the Danish by Miss Gunvar Mønster and published in *Hjælpeprogstidende* for March and April 1918 and turned from Ido into English by Gilbert H. Richardson.



natural causes—the movement hitherto has not been very extensive.

It is true that there are sceptics who allege that such an international universal language will be needed after the war less than before, because the nations for long will remain hostile and suspicious towards each other. Each will prefer his own, and will maintain it against the others. But exactly in that connection, many of the voices, to which I have just referred, have objected that even if we should not end up with what many imagine (and not only dreamers but people of influence, practical politicians from both belligerent sides) “the United States of Europe,” a still greater federation of nations, we shall nevertheless have at all events two powerful unions: the Central Powers and their confederates on one side and on the other the outer powers France and England with America on the west, with Russia on the east and Italy on the south. And in any case within each of these groups consolidated by the war, an auxiliary language will also be wanted, because neither of them possesses a single language which appears naturally as the sole means of getting understood among the different members of the group. So even if the world should be divided into two parts sharply separated by tariff walls and trenches, nevertheless an auxiliary language will be needed within each group—to say nothing of the poor neutrals with their smaller populations, for whom it is almost a necessary

condition of life to be able to do business and to communicate with both the groups.

There are not a few, however, who indeed recognize the **desirability** of such a common auxiliary language, but who do not believe that it will be possible to realize the idea, because agreement can never be reached on the question: which of the proposed languages is the best? We must admit that such agreement is a most important condition for the realization of the idea. Let us then enquire what possibility there is of obtaining this desirable agreement.

We shall perhaps be best able to judge of this if we examine the history of the affair. There have been offered actually about a hundred projects for world language—so it is evident that it is easy enough to construct such a more or less artificial system. But only three of these have succeeded in winning a fairly large group of adherents, beyond the inventor himself, namely: **Volapük** by the Bavarian priest **Schleyer**, **Esperanto** by a Polish doctor **Zamenhof**, and **Ido** by an International Committee. The first aroused great enthusiasm among many people during the decade 1880-1890, and at the beginning of the following decade for the first time it was seen to be possible to get one's self understood in international relations both spoken and written by the help of a made language. But it failed: it was easy enough to notice the defects of the language, yet the critics could not agree about the words and forms to be used in place of

the bad ones. There was too much to correct ; one insisted on one point, another on another and the result was confusion and dissolution. The wisest Volapükists took what was both the most drastic and most prudent course ; they set up a small academy which slowly and systematically discussed principles and details, and at last after many years presented **Idiom Neutral** in which there remained hardly anything of the original. Instead of most European words being massacred and deformed past recognition in Volapük, they appear in **Idiom Neutral** in their true form so that everyone understands the greater part of all ordinary phrases.

When, however, this language appeared Esperanto had already begun its triumphal march across many lands. It has many advantages over Volapük, mainly because it has adopted very many words common to Europe in a style easy to recognize. But Zamenhof has not applied this principle fully as it ought to be, and in many points one meets strange caprices of the inventor, which among other things hinder understanding at first sight and make the practical use of the language difficult. These points, have indeed, been criticised pretty largely in a benevolent tone by adherents of the idea of auxiliary language, and pretty sharply by persons outside the affair, who, by pointing to the defects of Esperanto, think they can injure the whole artificial language movement. However after a short period during which the inventor himself had started projects for

reform more than anyone else, he was influenced more and more by those of his followers who were afraid of any reform; they became anxious chiefly because of the fate of Volapük believing that the many proposals for reform caused the failure of that language. By stopping such proposals they therefore thought they would make the existence of Esperanto secure, and with increasing passion they persecuted every one of their group who began to talk of this or that word which surely might need enquiry and improvement. Thus they did not notice that the failure of Volapük was not really due to the projects of reform, but fundamentally to those qualities of the language itself which invited reforms; and if their own language invited improvements in many points (tho' in a much smaller number than Volapük) then the proper thing to do would have been to examine these points dispassionately and to try by what kind of reforms it might be possible to come to an agreement before it should be too late. For the more such a language has already been used and the greater the number of people who have learnt it in one form, the more difficult it will be to get them used to anything other than what they have learnt. For that reason, the best course is: first the reforms, afterwards the adoption of a language already purified and perfected. The better the language, the greater the chance of its being universally recognised and adopted by private people and by public authorities. These are the principles which from the beginning have guided the Ido movement.

## II.

Already when it first appeared in 1907 Ido was a combination of the best in Esperanto, Idiom-Neutral and other such artificial languages : and regard has been had in it for the criticism of linguists as well as of others with reference to Esperanto ; but the international committee which at its beginning recommended it were yet of the opinion that " the last word had not been said," and invited general criticism and discussion open to all. For this purpose the monthly review " Progreso " was conducted ; in its six thick volumes are to be found very many articles about general principles and details written by contributors from very many countries. For it is important to regard the question from as many points of view as possible ; what may seem reasonable and unambiguous to a Dane, may cause difficulties to a Hungarian, and misunderstanding to a Spaniard ; but if many different nations combine in helping to test every detail, then there is great probability that nothing important would escape attention. After detailed deliberation votes were taken in an international Academy elected by the members of the Ido-Union. It is true that by this means the language was changed little by little, so that now it looks in some points different from what it was at first ; still we submitted to the resulting disadvantages, trusting that " prevention is better than cure." It turned out that the number of projects for reform diminished gradually ; we came to an agreement on the most important points and obtained

a language so practically usable and theoretically defensible that we could unhesitatingly consider it in its present form as fixed, and we therefore established what we have termed a period of stability. Then was the time seriously to begin the work of getting for the language a still greater diffusion in wide circles than it had yet obtained by entirely quiet growth.

But immediately afterwards occurred the world war ; and it not only stopped, of sheer necessity, that kind of international collaboration, but it killed already at its commencement, the most eminent chief of the Ido movement, the famous French philosopher, Professor **Couturat**, whose motor-car collided with a large military motor-carriage. He had succeeded in finishing off his large French-Ido dictionary (the most copious dictionary so far edited in any artificial language), but it could not be disseminated so widely as would have been the case if the war had not hindered its sale and delivery. The corresponding German-Ido dictionary is now completed but remains in France as a pile of paper for the time being useless.<sup>1</sup> The English one is nearing its completion, and in our country Miss **Gunvar Münster** has been perseveringly at work on a Danish-Ido dictionary planned on a large scale.

If we now come back to the main question: the chances of success of artificial language after the war, the state of the case is, then, in my opinion this : that for Esperanto there is only to be said its greater number of adherents compared to

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<sup>1</sup> ---The dictionary is now obtainable from Ido-Editeyo, Lüsslingen, Solothurn, Switzerland, or from Mr. J. W. Baxter, 57, Limes Grove, Lewisham, London, S.E. 13.

that of the Idists—but on the other hand the Idists are not so few as their adversaries generally say, and among them are a good many who before 1907 were leaders and editors of Esperanto in the various countries. Everything else tells in favor of Ido. It is not the product of a single person, and for that reason it is free from the caprices, fancies and individual preferences which a single person can with difficulty avoid. It uses the already existing international vocabulary more extensively than does Esperanto, so that every educated European or American can understand at first sight almost every text, at any rate in his own speciality. It can be printed and telegraphed straight away, while Esperanto is defaced by several arbitrary consonants with circumflex accents; consequently special types are necessary in printing-houses, and an Esperanto text must be transcribed in a special manner before it can be sent by telegraph. Ido has a vocabulary more extensive and worked out more exactly; it has in general a better conscience in all respects. This is shown among other things by the simple fact that the Ido magazines do very often what the Esperanto reviews avoid, namely, print for comparison the same texts in two columns, in Ido and Esperanto. To this I will add a further circumstance which concerns not the language directly but those who use it: during the world war the Idists as such have observed the strictest neutrality, not wishing to use their language as war-propaganda, neither for the one nor for the other side,

while German Esperantists regularly every month have edited a review paid by the German government and containing a defence of German methods of war and spiteful attacks on other nations. At the beginning of the war a similar magazine was published on the French side too, "Por Francujo per Esperanto." I do not know whether it has ceased to be conducted ; but in any case paid work of that sort will not promote co-operation, when once we have peace.

In my article I have used the term artificial language in contrast to the languages which have developed naturally. But the reader must not suppose that we are dealing with anything altogether unnatural or artificial ; on the contrary : The modern artificial languages such as Esperanto, Idiom Neutral and even more so Ido, seem exceedingly natural to those who see and hear them. What has been attained by the long labor of recent years is just this : more and more to avoid the artificial, which in Volapük existed to a large extent and which also in large measure deforms Esperanto. The material used is that of the existing languages, the more universal the better—and what is discarded from the natural languages is merely whatever by its variability, irregularity and awkwardness hinders quick, easy and sure understanding and learning. By this means we have actually got a rich, adaptable, easy and beautiful language, which deserves to be adopted for ordinary use whenever any one alone of the existing national languages does not suffice.





## PREFACE, NOVIAL LEXIKE

THIS book presents the most necessary vocabulary of the international language NOVIAL (*NOV* new, *International Auxiliary Language*). In my book, *An International Language* (London, G. Allen & Unwin; German translation *Eine internationale Sprache*, Heidelberg, C. Winter), the reader will find (1) an introduction showing the urgent need for such a language, (2) the history of the movement with criticism of earlier proposed artificial languages, (3) a detailed grammar, in which, chapter by chapter, the reasons are given that have led to precisely those and to no other forms, (4) the scientific principles of word-selection, and (5) some specimens intended to show the use of the language for different purposes and in different styles.

How should an auxiliary language for international usage be constructed?

The *phonetic system* must be as simple as possible and contain no sounds or combinations which would present difficulty to many nations. Hence we can admit the five vowels *a, e, i, o, u* only, but neither nasalized vowels nor rounded front vowels (*ü, ö*), which are absent from such important languages as English, Spanish, Italian, Russian. As regards consonants we are similarly obliged to exclude palatalized sounds, such as those in French *agneau*; It. *ogni, egli*; Spanish *año, calle*; and the German *ch*- and the English *th*-sounds. By the exclusive use of *s*, where some languages distinguish a voiceless *s* and a voiced *z*, an important simplification is gained, not only because some nations are ignorant of that distinction, but also because the distribution of the two letters would necessarily be often arbitrary and consequently would have to be separately remembered for each word. Accentuation (stress) should not be used to discriminate words.

Our *spelling*, too, must be as easy as possible; we must therefore

avail ourselves of all such simplifications as have already been made in some languages, e.g. *f* instead of *ph*, *t* instead of *th*; single instead of double consonants and vowels, as in Spanish. Accents and other accessory marks above or at the side of letters are superfluous complications. No letter should be allowed to have two distinct pronunciations according to its position: *g* *gi*, *ge* must sound as in *ga*, *go* (cp. E. *give*, *get*). I know very well that many people would prefer *c* in *conclusionone*, *cria*, *clari*, etc., where I write *k*; the Romanic nations and the English dislike the letter *k* which is not beautiful!) but I must ask the reader to consider the fact that not only the Germans, the Dutch, and the Scandinavians, but also the Slav nations, thus very many millions, write *k* in Latin loan-words (in Polish, for instance, *kleryk*, *krędyt*, *klasa*, *kronika*, *krystal*; correspondingly in Czech, Russian, etc.). The new official Turkish spelling with Roman letters is in perfect agreement with the rules I had adopted for Novial before knowing of that fact *bank*, *koridor*, *fabrika*, *kontrol*, *kolosal*, *sigar*, *sivil*, *bisklet*. . . . Anyhow, *k* seems indispensable before *e* and *i*, e.g. *anke*, *kelki*, *kelke*; *amike* friend (epicene), hence naturally *amiko*, *amuka*, *amikal*. I grant, however, that the adoption of *c* instead of *k* in those combinations would not essentially affect the character of Novial and would be much more tolerable than the use of *c* for the sound of *s* or *ts*, which is particularly annoying before *a*, *o*, *u* (as in Esperanto). In an international language we might, perhaps we should, write everything with small letters, as the rules for capitals are more or less arbitrary in all languages—at present, however, I dare not propose that reform.

The *grammar* must be very simple and easy, i.e. as regular as possible. If one ending is adopted for the plural (here *s*) or for female beings (here *a*), it is best to apply it to all words, not only to nouns, but to pronouns as well. Some interlinguists do not acknowledge this principle and thus set up special pronominal forms for those two categories, alleging that pronouns are irregular in all national languages, and that it is therefore against ordinary linguistic psychology to create regular pronouns. This, however, is only a half-truth, one might even say that it is a fallacy: in their historical development even pronouns tend towards regularity, as I have demonstrated with regard to English as far back as 1891; and if such simplification comes about very slowly in this class of words, the reason is that the extremely

frequent use fixes the forms in the memory. Exactly the same thing happens with the most often used verbs, which for the same reason in all our languages are irregular (*am, is, was, be; bin, ist, sind, war; suis, est, sont, était, fut, sera; go, went; vais, aller, irai; gehe, ging, gegangen . . .*); but in spite of this no interlinguist has proposed to give an irregular inflection to the corresponding verbs in a constructed language. An exception is just as indefensible in one case as in the other. Progress in national languages has everywhere been in the direction of simple and analytic forms—this should be the guiding principle in the construction of an international language. And naturally such a language can and must be less capricious and less complicated than even the most progressive natural language.

Fortunately there exist numerous *word-building elements* (prefixes and suffixes) that are already known internationally and can be adopted without any change. The only thing required is to define their use and to be free to apply the same prefix or suffix to all words, whereas natural languages present all kinds of more or less inexplicable restrictions. Vague and inaccurate definitions of suffixes should have no place in a rational language, and even less acceptable—to mention one example only—is the use of the two Latin prefixes *in* in two nearly contradictory senses: *inscrit* inscribed and *inscrit* unwritten (the accent is an unsatisfactory and ineffective palliative). One of the great advantages of a constructed language is the power it gives every speaker to form a word by means of well-known suffixes without having first to inquire whether it is already in use; but if radicals and affixes are well chosen, it is possible by such means to form an astonishing number of universally known derivatives.

The chief principle for the *selection of vocables* is to use, wherever possible, words that are already international, and where these are missing to take those words which create the least friction. Unfortunately, some perfectly international words have meanings that are so far from being precise that they should be avoided in a really philosophical language, e.g. *nature, form, pension, materialism, romantic*. Novial does not and cannot pretend to remedy general deficiencies of that order, but in other cases I have endeavoured to specify meanings precisely. Where the languages that form the basis of Novial present the same or closely similar forms for two notions which it is necessary to keep apart, the most distinctive and the most easily remembered

forms have been chosen. Thus for the two meanings of German *Bank* = French *banque*, *banc* = English *bank*, *bench*, the forms *banke* (with *bankere*, *bankrote*) and *benche* are in every respect better than *banko* and *benko* (Ido), or *banq* (*bank* with *banqero* and *bancrott*) and *banc* (Occidental: how is one to pronounce these words differently?) This dictionary contains many examples of such differentiations which seem to me desirable or even indispensable (*organe orgele*; *horse purse*; *pasa pase pasu*; *volkane vulkanisa*; *komun komunie* . . .).

No one who knows the other constructed languages, and has given some little thought to the difficult problems which the construction of a language involves, will be surprised to find that I have in many cases vacillated between two forms where general principles do not with certainty lead to one single solution. Now I prefer *vorde*, *set*, *ot*, *mensu*, where at first I said *vorte*, *sep*, *ok*, *monate*. In a few cases I give two words as equally legitimate and leave the choice to interlinguists of the future (*sal ve*; *moneye pekunie*; *guere milite*; *vapornave stimshipe*). One might mention here among possible improvements the extension of the suffixes *ia*, especially after *nt* (*intelligentia*, *konvalensentia*, *presentia*) and *itate* (*felisitate*, *sinseritate*), as well as the use of adverbs without the ending *im* before adjectival words (*tot nudi*, *tal-nomat*, *extrem facil*, *bon konstruktet*, cp. *mal-format*).

All prefixes and suffixes, as well as the grammatical endings, have been inserted in alphabetic order.

It has been imperative to economize space in this dictionary; consequently translations are only given where it seemed absolutely necessary. Not every possible derivative has been indicated; those that are placed after | are formed with perfect regularity according to the rules of Novial; others, demanded by the example of national languages, have been placed after ||. Brevity being essential, this book presupposes benevolence and also a certain amount of intelligence in the reader. The following examples show how the laconic indications of the dictionary are to be interpreted by English, French, and German users:

*desembre* December.

*hiene* hyena.

*barikade* barricade | *barikada* barricade vb.

*akompana* accompany.

*abrikote* apricot | *abrikotiere* apricot-tree.

*profan* or *profani* profane adj. | *profana* profane vb. | *profanatione* profanation.

*karaktere* character | *karakterisa* characterize | *karakterisiv* characteristic || *karakteristike* characteristic (mathematics = index of logarithm).

Herr R. Zeidler, of Nordrach (Baden), has read through the manuscript and has communicated to me numerous important observations; the same has been done for parts of the book by Mr. H. D. Akerman, of London, and M. J. Barral, of Berre-des-Alpes: to all these three gentlemen I return my cordial thanks for their valuable assistance, as well as to Mr. N. Haislund, of Copenhagen, who has helped me in reading the proofs; though for any mistakes that may be found in the book I must myself bear the full responsibility. Finally, I must express my respectful gratitude to the Rask-Ørsted-Fond, of Copenhagen, for the generous subvention which has made it possible to issue the book at a very cheap price.

——— *Novial Lexike*, 1930.



## INTERLINGUISTICS

A new science is developig, Interlinguistics—that branch of the science of language which deals with the structure and basic ideas of all languages with a view to the establishing of a norm for interlanguages, *i. e.* auxiliary languages destined for oral and written use between people who cannot make themselves understood by means of their mother tongues. Interlinguists contend, and to my mind, rightly, that there is here a field that can be treated according to scientific methods and which it is of the utmost importance to civilized mankind to see thus treated in order to obtain a satisfactory solution of a really harassing problem.

Linguistic conditions in Europe are desperate. No less than 120 languages are spoken in Europe, and even if we leave out of consideration those that are spoken by less than one million people, we have 38 languages, most of which are used as literary as well as spoken languages. German comes first with 80 million, then Russian with 70, English with 47 (remember that we are speaking here of Europe only), Italian 40, French 39, Little-Russian 33, Polish 23, Spanish 15, Rumanian 13, Dutch 11, and Hungarian 10 million; the other languages, headed by Serbian and Portuguese, have less than 10 million speakers.

All these languages are mutually unintelligible; when two persons of different nationalities want to speak or write to each other, an interpreter is needed, unless one of them has taken the trouble—and it is a trouble—to learn the other's language, or both have taken the trouble to learn the same third language. We have statistics showing the amount paid in customs duties on material wares, but no statistics are available to show the fantastic sums and the fantastic length of time spent every year on translations from one language to another: the burden of intellectual "customs duties" is undoubtedly heavier than that of material ones.

The worst of it is that at the same time that technical inventions



render communication between countries easy to an extent which our forefathers could not dream of, nationalism is everywhere raising its head and making each nation feel and maintain, even aggressively maintain, its own value. National jealousies are nowadays so strong that it is out of the question to have one of the existing languages adopted everywhere as the recognized means of international communication, which all educated persons would be supposed to know, and to use in their relations with no matter what foreign nation. Latin would be neutral and in so far escape one of the decisive objections which prevent English or French from becoming the universal auxiliary language, but then Latin is extremely difficult, and, moreover, totally incongruent with modern life and modern requirements. None of the living or dead languages can be recommended for the purpose that occupies us here.

One way of getting out of this impasse is so obvious that it is no wonder it has come into the heads of a great many people: why not construct an artificial language that is so easy that everybody can master it in far less time than it usually takes to learn one of the ordinary languages? Philosophers and laymen alike, at any rate from the time of Descartes, Leibniz and Comenius, have been enthusiastic for this idea, and a great many attempts have seen the light of day, most of them, however, to die without attracting one thousandth part of the attention that their fond fathers dreamt of. How much ingenuity has been spent on this task can be gathered from turning over the leaves of Couturat and Leau's great *Histoire de la Langue Universelle* with its continuation *Les Nouvelles Langues Internationales*, where are to be found short descriptive sketches of more than a hundred such languages; see also now the painstaking *Bibliografio de Internacia Lingvo*, compiled for the *Universala Esperanto Asocio* by P. E. Stojan—a bibliography which runs to no less than 560 pages, and contains over six thousand entries. Of these, over five thousand are titles of books and treatises on and in international languages, and the balance on various subjects including universal grammar, code and sign languages, pasigraphy and logic.

From the great number of these attempts we may draw the conclusion that it presents no insurmountable difficulty to devise languages for international use, though when we come to examine

them a little more closely, we see that too many of their inventors have contented themselves with a bare sketch of a skeleton grammar with some notes on the vocabulary, so that the material is far too scanty to be used even for the most humble purposes. Comparatively few projects have got so far that their vocabulary has been sufficient for practical use, and even more restricted is the number of those that have been actually used by more than a dozen people. It is thus seen to be easy enough to sketch such a language, more difficult to make it tolerably complete, and still more difficult to get it accepted by a considerable body of adherents—let alone by the world at large.

At present there are only six language projects that have got far enough to be accepted by more than a handful of people, namely, *Esperanto*, invented by Dr. L. Zamenhof in 1887, *Ido*, elaborated by an Academy on a basis due to de Beaufront and Couturat in 1907, *Nov-Esperanto* by René de Saussure, which after various changes received its final shape in 1929, *Latino sine flexione* or *Interlingua*, begun by Professor G. Peano in 1903, *Occidental* elaborated by Edgar Wahl in 1922, and finally *Novial* published in 1928 by the present writer. Of these Esperanto has by far the greatest number of adherents—but even the most ardent Esperantists must concede that great as this number is, it represents only a small minority of those to whom such a language might be useful.

The general impression among the public at large is that these attempted interlanguages are created arbitrarily, and that they fight each other vigorously. It is by no means rare to hear the remark: The idea of a constructed international language is not at all bad, and I should be inclined to support it in every way, but an indispensable condition is that the champions of the idea come to an agreement as to which language to adopt; so long as that is not attained, you cannot expect the world at large to take an active interest in the matter.

Now it cannot be denied that there is some truth in this, and that partisans of some interlanguages have at times been fierce in their onslaughts on other systems; but, as will appear from what I shall say later, this war of all against all has to a great extent subsided—owing, partly, to a more general acknowledgement of the fact that the millennium of universal adoption of any one system is

still far away, and that no system is yet perfect in every way. People also begin to realize that the uninterrupted rise of new projects and the criticism raised against these and the older systems have on the whole been helpful to the idea, because they have brought out with ever-increasing clearness the complexity of the problem as well as the fact that a good many, though not, perhaps, all points, admit of a scientific treatment. It has not been injurious to the production of good typewriters or automobiles that people have not been content with the models prevalent twenty years ago, but have been constantly at work experimenting and inventing new improvements, with the result that what we have now surpasses the earlier products very considerably. Correspondingly, it may be said of interlanguages that they have profited from the experimentation and discussion of the last twenty years or more.

Considerations like these, though formulated in a different way, underlay the foundation, in 1924, of the American *International Auxiliary Language Association* (abbreviated IALA), which has since worked assiduously and effectively in various ways, of which I shall here mention the pedagogical experiments carried out by Professor Edward L. Thorndike, of Columbia University and others, and the far-reaching and painstaking linguistic researches undertaken especially by Professors William E. Collinson of the University of Liverpool, and Edward Sapir of the University of Chicago.

In the spring of 1930 IALA thought the time ripe for an international Meeting of Linguistic Research, and after due preparation this meeting was held at Geneva in March and April. It will be my task in the following pages to give my impressions of this Meeting, of which I had the honour to be 'convener' and chairman, and which, it may be confidently hoped, will be mentioned in future as marking a significant step in the progress of the cause of an International Auxiliary Language.

The meeting fell into two parts of one week each. During the first week active interlinguists only were present, among whom the three originators of Nov-Esperanto, Occidental and Novial (de Saussure, Wahl and Jespersen; besides Siegfried Auerbach, during many years leader of the Ido movement; Pierre Stojan, author of the Bibliography already mentioned; and Reinhold Zeidler, who has

for a great many years in his privacy carried on lexicographical work embodying extensive comparisons of national and international languages. After a week these were joined by three well-known university professors of comparative philology who had not previously taken an active part in the work for an auxiliary language—Albert Debrunner of Jena, Edward Hermann of Göttingen, and Otto Funke of Bern. Three prominent members of the faculty of the University of Geneva, Charles Bally, Serge Karcevski, and Albert Sèchéhayé, as well as Pitman B. Potter of the University of Wisconsin, were also present at some of the discussions. IALA was thoroughly represented (in addition to the convener) by Professor Willam E. Collinson, Miss Helen S. Eaton and, last, but not least, the indefatigable organizer of IALA itself, Mrs. Dave Hennen Morris. During the last few days the President of IALA, Earle B. Babcock, of the University of New York, was also present. Seven States, six National and five International languages were thus represented in our little body—and each of these numbers would have been increased by one if Professor Peano, the mathematician and symbolic logician, who had promised to come, had not, unfortunately, been prevented at the last moment.

It was gratifying to hear the three ‘outsiders’ express their surprise and joy at observing the feeling of goodwill and comradeship prevailing among the adherents of the different interlanguages, and no less gratifying to hear their unanimous appreciation of the scientific spirit in which the work of IALA and of this meeting was carried on. Professor Hermann recalled the anything but friendly attitude which professional linguists had in previous decades taken towards endeavours in this direction, and said that his own and his colleagues’ presence showed a considerable change in the views of at any rate some philologists. He ascribed this change partly to the fact that interlinguists have to some extent struck new paths, partly to the increased interest taken now by philologists in problems of general linguistics and the philosophy of speech. Personally, he regretted not having been active hitherto in the interlinguistic movement, but hoped for the best results of the collaboration of linguists and interlinguists on a scientific foundation. Similarly, Professor Debrunner rejoiced that interlinguists were getting away from dilettantism and

called their attention to the fact that a great amount of work already done by philologists might be useful for the purposes of further research. This should be systematically gathered by someone versed in scientific method and competent to single out and to make easily accessible what has already been achieved in the science of language.

In this connection it is worth mentioning that the problem of artificial languages will be taken up by the second international linguistic congress to be held in 1931 at Geneva.

Professor Funke made some interesting remarks on the way in which he was brought to take an interest in the problem of artificial languages. First as an Austrian officer in the Great War, when he had an Ukrainian chauffeur, Polish soldiers, a Hungarian servant and possibly Czech privates. In Poland he had five different nations under him and could make himself understood with none of them except by means of interpreters. Austria's problem was, among other things, a linguistic problem. Later he heard of the experiences of some colleagues who had been prisoners in Siberia and were there thrown together with people of the most diverse nationalities from East and West. The necessity of mutual comprehension led groups of them to set up courses of Esperanto; one of his friends came back an enthusiastic believer in that language and its possibilities even among non-Europeans. The chief reason, however, why Funke was interested in these questions was his scholarly interest in the philosophy of speech. This branch of knowledge starts from the conviction that the human psyche has everywhere a common structure, which must find its expression in language and must be capable of a simpler and more uniform expression in a constructed language.

One day during the conference a practical demonstration gave those present an opportunity of judging, however, superficially, of some of the qualities of the six artificial languages mentioned above: the first few pages of one of Maupassant's short stories had been translated, one part into Esperanto, another into Nov-Esperanto, etc., and these pieces were read aloud after a few explanatory remarks. There was one thing which could not be brought out by this demonstration and which is felt to be extremely important by all those who have practised any one of the constructed languages: the beneficent ease with which they are handled and which frees one from the feeling of constraint

and uncertainty with which most of us are embarrassed when speaking or writing a foreign language. "We face our foreign audience", says Collinson, "without that haunting and paralyzing fear of making a ridiculous mistake or at best of speaking in a stilted and grandiloquent way. In writing a letter it is a positive relief not to have to balance up the possibilities of *sentiments distingués* or *cordiales salutations*"—not to speak of hesitations as to case and gender or word-order. All those idiomatic caprices which abound in natural languages are as a matter of course eliminated in constructed languages.

The following list was drawn up of the chief points on which all the International Languages (abbreviated ILs) represented at Geneva agree :

POINTS OF AGREEMENT IN ESPERANTO, IDO, NOV-ESPERANTO, LATIN  
WITHOUT FLEXIONS, OCCIDENTAL, NOVAL

1. *Alphabet*.—All ILs use Latin characters.
2. *Pronunciation*.—All ILs agree in principle in the pronunciation of the following letters : a, e, i, o, u ('continental' values, *u* as in Italian, not as in French); b, d, f, h, k, l, m, n, p, r, t, v.
3. *Substantial roots*.—The substantial roots (expressing things, actions, qualities) of ILs represented are, as a matter of fact, drawn chiefly from the Indo-European languages.
4. *No vowel changes*.—None of the ILs represented at the Conference permit vowel change within the root itself.
5. *Plural*.—All ILs represented form the plural by an ending. In each IL there is but a single method of forming the plural to which all substantives conform. No IL has a separate form for a dual number.
6. *Expression of 'dative'*.—In all ILs represented the normal way of rendering the 'dative' of inflected languages is by using a preposition of direction (Lat. *ad*).
7. *No gender in substantives or adjectives*.—Substantives have no grammatical gender, but can be made to show distinction of natural sex. Adjectives have no gender and normally show no distinction of natural sex.
8. *Conjugation*.—In every IL represented, one single paradigm of conjugation is provided to which all verbs conform.
9. *Tenses*.—There is no distinction of person or number within the finite tenses of the verb.
10. *Prepositions*.—Prepositions as such do not govern any particular case of the noun.

How encouraging to see the agreement emphasized instead of squabbles on petty points of disagreement.

These points of agreement are again alluded to in the following Declaration, which was unanimously accepted at the final meeting

## INTERLINGUISTICS

and which is sure to be remembered as a landmark in the history of the International Language movement.

### DECLARATION

The undersigned, invited by the International Auxiliary Language Association in the United States, Incorporated (IALA), to a Meeting of Linguistic Research in Geneva, desire, in their personal capacity and not as delegates from any organization, to make the following declaration :

1. They agree that the six systems of international language represented among them have a great many points in common, of such a nature that their adherents can understand one another without much difficulty, orally as well as in writing, each one using his own system.

2. They unanimously recognize the need for a universal auxiliary language, simple in form, politically neutral and destined to facilitate relations between peoples.

3. They agree that each system presents certain advantages peculiar to itself, but that no one of them can claim to be perfect, and therefore that any decision tending to determine definitely the international language of the future is still premature.

4. They hope to see the collaboration between linguists (comparative philologists and philosophers of language) and interlinguists continue to grow, and they hope for important results from this co-operation and from the extensive work planned by IALA.

5. They consider extremely desirable the best possible understanding among all interlinguists, regardless of any particular system, as well as their co-operation in the study of certain problems common to them all. If such co-operation could contribute to the creation of a united front, the cause of international language would greatly benefit thereby and its definite adoption would be hastened.

*Geneva, April 8, 1930.*

With regard to linguistic research the Meeting accepted 'in principle' a plan, submitted to it by Professor K. Asakawa of Yale, according to which the work should proceed in concentric circles of study, viz.:

1. A more philosophical study of the "Foundations of Language" (according to a scheme drawn up by Professors Sapir and Collinson).

2. A scientific comparison of languages : an objective examination of the structure of selected languages, national and international, both with regard to details and to the languages as wholes.

3. Preparation for synthesis: a comprehensive survey and criticism of the results of the first two circles with a view to finding data for a synthetic scheme of a definite language for international use.

In connection with the work on the first circle, an interesting remark was made by Collinson, much of whose work has been directed towards "a study of the principles which would seem to

control the linguistic activities of a man's mind". But how he has been 'slowly and almost reluctantly' driven to the view that "it is precisely through our own individual use of and reaction to our mother tongue that we can approach these general and fundamental problems of thought-structures and realize to the full their complexity and subtlety". At the same time he recognizes the great importance which the work of recent logicians and 'logisticians' like Peano, Whitehead and Russell will have for these studies.

The second circle, which occupied most of the time of the meeting, aims at an objective presentation and comparison of the actual facts and existing national and proposed international languages. Here the question first arises: What languages to compare? While everybody agreed that the chief European languages, *i. e.* those spoken by the greatest numbers, should be primarily examined, opposition was raised to the idea of confining comparisons to these languages. It was justly said, for instance, that the Scandinavian languages were often more valuable to the framers of an international language than High German, because their forms are easier and more fluent. On the other hand, much could be learned from the smaller and less-known European languages, even from those that do not belong to the Aryan (Indo-European) family of languages.

I may be allowed to say here that this question is apt to throw some light on the proper understanding of Asakawa's system of three circles. If the end to be kept in view is the abstract one of understanding human speech activity, then all languages are of equal importance, and the dialect of any smallest negro tribe ranks equal with English or Spanish. But if the ultimate end is the synthesis of a language to be used in international relations, if, therefore, in dealing with the second circle we are allowed, as I think we should be, to 'squint' more or less continually towards the third circle, then we at once perceive that languages are of very unequal importance. It would be vain to aim at a real 'world-language' in the sense of one that should be perfectly impartial to human beings of whatever nationality and language, for that could be done only by carefully eliminating all words and even elements already found in any of the existing languages that is, by making the contemplated artificial language as difficult as possible for everybody. The task of con-



structing and even of learning such a language would be beyond human power. But the matter assumes a different aspect as soon as it is recognized that we should utilize as much as possible any community in linguistic form already existing, for it turns out that there is nowhere in the world anything that can be compared with the community existing among West-European nations and their offshoots in the other parts of the world. Thanks to the Greco-Latin culture and its expansion, especially after the Renaissance, an enormous number of words have spread over the greater part of Europe, over America and Australia, and great parts of Africa, and are even penetrating into Asia. It would be absurd in trying to create a language for international purposes, to abstract from it what may already be said to be international, if not in the fullest sense of that word, yet approaching that ideal more than any other body of words. But this amounts to saying that the languages which contain the largest number of such words and from which they are still being chiefly drawn should be taken into consideration before and more than any other languages. There can be no doubt that the vocabulary of the future auxiliary language must be predominantly based on the Romanic languages and English; but such widely spread cultural languages as German and Russian must on no account be neglected. The minor European languages can only play second fiddle; a study of them will chiefly be of use by showing in how far the Romanic and other cultural words have penetrated into them as cultural elements. If it is objected that in this way we can obtain at best a means of communication for Europeans and Americans, it may be answered that this would already be an important gain and that European culture is rapidly spreading to other parts of the world; it must be left to the future to work out the problem of a real world-language, if people are not content with a common European-American tongue.

What has been said here applies to the vocabulary only, but language consists not of the bare words alone: by the side of them we have grammar, that is, the linguistic structure that enables the speaker or writer to knit full words together so that they give an intelligible coherent meaning. If it is admitted that the vocabulary must chiefly be drawn from Romanic-English sources, a natural consequence must be that many derivative endings found in such words

must be utilized as well as the stems themselves, and thus a good deal of structural material is given at the very outset. But apart from such elements, interlinguistic grammatical study should not confine itself to any one group or two groups of languages, for here is a field in which it is possible and even highly probable that valuable hints may be found in the most diverse languages, even in those whose vocabularies is on the whole out of the question. The object must be to find the simplest grammatical structure that is compatible with the necessary clearness and precision of thought. Very much can be learned in that respect from such grammatically simple languages as Chinese and also from those generally despised corruptions of European languages which I have elsewhere designed as makeshift languages or minimum languages: Pidgin English, Beach-la-mar, Papiamentu and Creole languages generally. It was interesting to hear the philologists at Geneva make the objection to some of the proposed auxiliary languages that too much weight had been laid on capability of expressing subtle shades of thought instead of on greater simplicity. I may be allowed here to quote a remark by a fully competent Chinese scholar, Professor Chiu Bien-Ming of the University of Amoy, who says that the selection of words could only be 'international' in the European sense, a principle which the Chinese should not seriously contest; but, on the other hand, the syntax should be easily accessible to the Chinese or, if possible, be in reality similar to the Chinese construction. Both these postulates he found very ably fulfilled in the auxiliary language in which he wrote (see the periodical *Mondo*, March, 1929).

There is work enough for scientific interlinguists to take up, and it seems evident that much of it cannot be achieved in a satisfactory way without systematized collaboration of theoretical students of linguistic science and active interlinguists. The former alone cannot hope to arrive at completely satisfactory solutions of all the difficulties; for, as in other domains of human activity, the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and only those who have for years practised constructed languages can penetrate into all their possibilities and hope to avoid some of the pitfalls into which beginners are apt to fall. But, on the other hand, active adherents of recent schemes are more and more conscious of the desirability and even necessity of support

from professional philologists if the great cause of linguistic understanding among nations is to be brought to a victorious close. Too much of the work done in this field bears the stamp of dilettantism, and though the best recent schemes are based on conscientious painstaking work along scientific lines—and this is true in even higher degree than appears on the face of their dictionaries and grammars, because the originators have had neither time nor money enough to publish detailed accounts of those reasonings which have led them to adopt this or that word, this or that form—even if much good work has thus already been accomplished, there is more still to be done, and there is a pressing need for enthusiastic and competent workers in this field.

IALA therefore deserves the highest praise for bringing the two camps, theorists and practitioners, into close relations with one another. It is greatly to be desired that the funds necessary to carry out the research projects so carefully planned at the Geneva meeting will be secured, and that the planned collaboration on a large scale will be brought to a successful end. The advent of a simple and adequate International Auxiliary Language will prove a boon to philologists, philosophers, medical men, scientists, technicians, politicians, merchants, tourists—in short, to everybody whose horizon is not limited to his native country.

- - *International Communication*, 1931.

## INTRODUCTION, THE UNIVERSAL ADOPTION OF ROMAN CHARACTERS

There can be no doubt that intellectual co-operation throughout the whole civilised world would be made much easier if the same system of writing were used everywhere. The great diversity of alphabets constitutes, indeed, one of the greatest barriers to rapprochement between races and nations.

The very large number of documents from particularly authoritative sources which are brought together in this volume highlight all the varied aspects of this problem and show clearly the advantages as well as the disadvantages of the universal adoption of the Roman alphabet, whether modified or not. One is often struck by the great forces which struggle against reform in some of the countries already possessing another system. In addition to the conservatism which is so deeply rooted in human nature, we observe here and there the force of nationalism opposing the adoption of an alphabet borrowed from another nation; sometimes also religious arguments carry some weight: thus in Jugoslavia, we have the curious spectacle of a division of the population into two religious camps using for the notation of what remains fundamentally the same language two different systems of writing. The position is much the same in a part of India where Hindustani is divided into a Moslem form (Urdu) and a Brahman form (Hindi) using two absolutely different alphabets. For their part, the partisans of the curious renaissance of Hebrew consider any attempt to adopt Roman letters as "an act of profanation and destruction towards the spirit of the race". But however powerful these political and religious considerations may be for the peoples concerned and the practical solution of the problem, I must now set them aside as being out of my province and concentrate exclusively on the linguistic aspects of the question.

If we wish to weigh the advantages and disadvantages which would result from the adoption of the Roman alphabet in a country where it is not in use, it is obvious that the interests of the native

population to whom the reform would apply must be of primary consideration whereas those of the world in general must take second place. For the population concerned the advantages can be of two kinds: internal and external. Among the first, attention should be drawn to the facility with which the art of reading and writing in the native language can be learned. In many countries, considerable time would be saved: Mr. Tanakadate estimates that, in the East, more than half the time spent at school is devoted exclusively to learning to read and write, whereas in any European country, even among those having extremely archaic and complicated spelling, these studies are infinitely shorter.

The reform under consideration would also combat illiteracy: the number of illiterates is in some countries really alarming, as is brought out in several places in the documents contained in this volume: "one can count on one's fingers the Cambodians who have read their literature" (p. 36); as for China, Mr. Karlgren estimates that the proportion of illiterates is 90 per cent (p. 55); as for the Soviet Republics cf (p. 146, 152, 158). Mr. Karthaios says (p. 70) "that no Greek—except perhaps a few Hellenists—can conscientiously affirm that he is able to write on any subject without having a dictionary beside him". All this would be changed, if not totally, at least to a great extent, by the adoption of a single alphabet based on the Roman letters, as can be seen from the fine example of Turkey (p. 126 et seq.).

With regard to the "external" advantages, it should be mentioned that the Roman alphabet would facilitate considerably practical and scientific communication with the outside world, which tends to become more and more urgent by reason of the development of modern technique. Let us mention here only the possibility of telegraphing everywhere and using everywhere the same typographic and dactylographic machines. Even now, we see in several countries that, even before the traditional writing has been given up, people are beginning to write, for example, the names of railway stations and streets in Roman letters side by side with the native rendering; the same is also the case for the titles of some magazines and books directed towards an international public, without speaking of chemical and mathematical formulae. Quotations in French and English always

look somewhat odd in the middle of a text printed, for example, in Japanese characters. This would, of course, be avoided if the whole of the printed text were in characters of a single alphabet.

It is natural that the enquiry undertaken by the Institute of Intellectual Co-operation should have confined itself exclusively to the possibilities of adopting Roman letters without envisaging the choice of another alphabet or the creation of a new one for universal use. All the same, one should not lose sight of the fact that the Roman alphabet does not fulfil all the conditions that could be desired. It was created originally to represent one language without any concern for the needs of other languages and one must say that even for Latin it is not ideal. It is absolutely lacking in system: while the letters *b* and *p* resemble each other and seem to indicate that the two sounds are produced by the same organic movements, it is not possible to see from the form of the letters that the same relationship exists between *d* and *t* and between *g* and *k*. In a word, the forms of the letters are quite arbitrary and have no natural connexion with the sounds of the language. Nowadays, another shortcoming lies in the fact that the same letter is represented by several forms of which the reason and the utility defy comprehension: compare, for example, the roman and italic types *a* and *a*, *v* and *v*, and, above all the capitals and small letters *Aa*, *Bb*, *Dd*, *Ee*, *Ff*, *Nn*, etc., in short, what is for some letters—and was intended to be for all—only a difference in size is for others a fairly considerable difference in form, and then again I have not mentioned the differences in the way of writing these forms among the different nations, so that, instead of learning one form for each letter, it is necessary to be familiar with several; compare, for example, the way in which the French, the English and the Germans write a capital *T*.

It is also to be regretted that two nations, Germany and Ireland, have recently begun to favour the use of so-called national lettering. What in Germany is called "German lettering" is in reality nothing else than an angular form of the Roman letters, a form which was widely used in the Middle Ages and later in many countries (in Denmark, where it was often used until about the end of last century, it was called "Danish lettering"). In Ireland they have revived a form of the Roman alphabet dating from the depths of the Middle

Ages and which was then also widely used in England. These two countries have thus, for nationalist reasons, separated themselves from the rest of the civilised world, thereby rendering international communication more difficult.

In recent centuries, there has been in Europe only one universal reform affecting the alphabet, namely, the differentiation of 'i' and 'j' and 'u' and 'v'—forms originally employed without phonetic distinction and now separated, so that 'i' and 'u' are vowels and 'j' and 'v' (with 'w') consonants. And yet even that very useful differentiation has not come about in a uniform way: the letter 'j' has four different values in the French *jour*, the English *join*, the Spanish *Juan* and the German *ja*, while the letter 'v' is pronounced differently in German from its pronunciation in other languages.

The Roman alphabet also has too few symbols; most spoken languages are not satisfied, for example, with the five vowels a, e, i, o and u and have also consonantal sounds which are without symbols in the alphabet. In several languages supplementary symbols have been introduced such as a, ó and ú in German and other languages (in Magyar also there are ô and u for the long vowels), the å in Swedish, the accented vowels in several languages, the ç in French and several letters in Czech, Polish and Rumanian. But, unfortunately, these modifications are neither identical nor comparable from one language to another and finally, in nearly no language are they sufficient to express all the phonemes in the system. Very often, also, digraphs have been used, especially with the help of an h: sh, ch, th, or even a trigraph: sch.

Another disadvantage—and a most serious one—is the fact that the phonetic value of the alphabetic symbols is not everywhere the same; this is a consequence of the different development of languages in various stages of history. The rounded velary vowel is, then, indicated by *u* in German, *ou* in French, *oo* in English and *œ* in Dutch; the letter *c* before *i* and *e* is pronounced in at least four different ways, etc. Consequently, "the same name appears in newspapers as *Cicerin* in Italian, *Tchitchérine* in French, *Chicherin* in English, *Tsjitsjerin* or *Tjitjerin* in Danish, etc. It is possible to calculate mathematically in how many ways the single Russian name Chekov can be written since the initial sound (or group of sounds)

is rendered according to circumstance, by *ch*, *tch*, *c*, *tsj*, *tj*, *cz* or *c*, the middle consonant by *ch*, *kh*, *k*, *h* or *x*, and the final consonant by *v*, *f*, or *ff*".<sup>(1)</sup>

All the same, despite all its imperfections and shortcomings, the Roman alphabet is the only one of which the universal adoption could be recommended. It is in itself clearer and more convenient for both writing and printing than most other alphabets, but the most decisive argument in favour of its general adoption lies in the fact that this alphabet is in firmly fixed use throughout the whole of the Western world, and therefore in all the most important countries for world civilisation. But in order that the adoption of this alphabet in countries which do not yet use it may fulfil adequately the purpose intended, there is one *conditio sine qua non*, namely, that the letters should be used in a more consistent and systematic way than in the traditional spelling existing in France or England, for example. In applying the Roman alphabet to any new language, it would be necessary to steer clear of anomalies like those of the English *though* and *through* or the French *seau* and *sot*. On the other hand, if every language employs the symbols in a manner at once uniform and easy to remember, it is less important that the same symbol should have the same value in all of them. A certain number of small divergences is absolutely inevitable and cannot be regarded as very harmful. For it must always be remembered that an alphabet is mainly intended for the natives of the country using it of whom the majority will not learn foreign languages. As for the rest, it is to be hoped that they will be sufficiently intelligent to overcome this difficulty: they will be faced with a good many others.

In the study with which we are concerned, it is desirable to establish a very clear distinction between languages which have no written form, or nearly none, and those which already possess a literature written in a form other than the Roman alphabet. The introduction of this alphabet is, of course, much easier in the first case than in that of a people having already a literary tradition; the older and more widespread among people this tradition is, the

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(1) "Phonetic Transcription and Transliteration". Copenhagen Conference, Oxford, 1926, p. 6.



more difficult it will be to bring about radical reform.

The problem is, then, relatively easy to solve for languages having no written literature, such as the majority of African languages. With regard to these last, much progress has been made recently in creating for many of them systems of writing worthy of the highest praise, for they are perfectly adapted to the individuality of the languages to which they are applied; *vide* the authoritative report of Mr. Westermann (p. 27 et seq.).

Languages which already possess a writing system cannot all be considered in the same way. If a substantial part of the population concerned can already read and write, reform is much more difficult than if the majority is illiterate. This is what explains the great success of the bold experiment undertaken by Kemal Pasha in Turkey where at one stroke the Roman alphabet was substituted for Arabic writing. The reform reduced considerably the number of illiterates and, thanks to the new facilities made available by the Roman alphabet, which is infinitely better adapted than Arabic to the Turkish phonological system, popular education has made remarkable progress in recent years.

We should not, however, draw immediate conclusions from this with regard to Persia, where Arabic writing was also applied to a language ill-suited for it. But conditions in this case are quite different since Persia is a much more "literary" nation than Turkey and possesses a long poetic tradition of the greatest value. By changing the alphabet in that country there would be a danger of creating a state of affairs in which the literary heritage would become either a dead letter or a monopoly of an intellectual élite able to enjoy the luxury of learning two distinct methods of reading the mother tongue. Nevertheless, there is perhaps no reason to suppose that the situation would become the same as that about 1200 years ago, when the Pehlevi alphabet was replaced by the Arabic alphabet, which resulted in the rapid disappearance of all the ancient literature because the writing in which it was composed was no longer taught to children of the lettered classes. Today, the danger would certainly not be so great for, thanks to typography, it is possible to preserve fairly easily the most precious part of the literature written until now in Arabic characters. Indeed, it is noticeable in all countries that the

literature which is worthy of being widely read is constantly reprinted whereas another type of literature is reserved for a small number of scholars who find it in libraries. To have two alphabets operating concurrently, one for commercial and everyday use and the other for "higher" literature, would certainly be unbearable in the long run. The writing must be the same for everything and everybody.

There exist relatively few languages using at the present time an alphabet other than the Roman in regard to which one could be satisfied with a simple transliteration similar to that used in linguistics for Sanskrit, Pali, etc., for most writing systems are not sufficiently simple to allow of such a substitution letter by letter. This emerges with truly absolute clarity from the report on modern Greek; here the value of the ancient letters has been so much modified in the course of centuries that a simple transliteration would produce veritable chaos, whereas it seems possible, by applying the principles recommended in the report in question, to establish an orthography meeting all reasonable requirements. For Cambodian, it would perhaps be possible to act in the same way, by basing the orthography on the present phonological system and keeping transliteration only for old texts and inscriptions which are no longer of much interest except to scholars.

In many cases, it would be pernicious to set much store by the systems used until now by missionaries and writers of manuals for the use of Europeans; very often these innovations had not a satisfactory linguistic education and merely applied in rough and ready fashion the spelling of their own language, supplementing it with new symbols according to their own fancy, sometimes without taking into account all the important nuances of the languages for which they wanted to supply a notation. It should be noted, however, that such shortcomings are becoming rarer.

Among the countries possessing a literature, China and Japan must be put in a class apart. It is well known that Chinese writing is essentially ideographic, or rather, logographic, treating each word as a unit without dissolving it, as we do, into its phonetic elements. The excellent report of Mr. Karlgren brings out very clearly the character of this writing system and the manner in which it serves as an exclusively visual link between the different parts of that

enormous country in which the spoken language is very far from being the same everywhere. We see also how the methods of expression in the spoken language are in the process of radical change, getting away very definitely from the laconic character of classical Chinese. This recent development makes a fundamental reform more and more inevitable but, on the other hand, this reform comes up against greater difficulties, perhaps, than anywhere else for, even if we take as a basis the pronunciation which is beginning to be recognised as that of the national language, there is an eminently characteristic feature of the structure of the language which makes the rendering of it by means of the Roman alphabet extremely difficult: I mean the number of distinctive tones which it is absolutely essential to indicate in order to avoid innumerable ambiguities. It would be unbearable to indicate these tones, as is often done in teaching manuals for Europeans, by superimposed or juxtaposed numbers, or by similar means. Several more complicated and ingenious systems have been proposed but none of them has had general acceptance and, as long as there is no agreement on a practical solution of this thorny problem, the introduction of the alphabet will, unfortunately, be impossible. And yet the day will come (and that perhaps sooner than we expect) when all China and even the whole world will call for this virtually inevitable reform.

It is true that the reform would mean a complete break with the old tradition and the literature would become "incomprehensible to anybody who has not studied it as a foreign language". But is that not what is already happening in China and will continue to happen even if the traditional system is religiously preserved? Every Chinese child beginning to read at present is faced with a written language which is so fundamentally different from his natural spoken language that it is at least as difficult to learn as Spanish or Portuguese for an Italian child; already in present circumstances, complete mastery of the ancient literature is confined in China to the small privileged class which can sacrifice years to the acquisition of that very complex art.

In Japan, conditions are comparable but not quite the same. The traditional writing is composed of Chinese ideographs to which are added syllabic symbols (Kana) made necessary by the linguistic

structure of Japanese which is totally different from that of Chinese (synthetic instead of analytical); these symbols indicate partly flexional and derivative elements and partly the Japanese pronunciation of the Chinese characters<sup>(1)</sup>. The introduction of the Roman alphabet would make this complicated machinery much more manageable. It would not seem to involve difficulties comparable to those existing in China since the phonological structure of Japanese is more in conformity with those of the Western world. Two rival systems have been proposed for the use of Roman letters in Japanese: the first elaborated by Europeans and used mainly by and for foreigners learning Japanese, although it is also preferred by certain Japanese (it is usually called after the lexicographer J. C. Hepburn)—and the second elaborated by Japanese is generally called Nipponsiki (or Nihonsiki) Rômazi<sup>(2)</sup>.

It is perhaps rash for a foreigner to express an opinion on the relative value of these two systems; if I venture to express a preference for the second it is because it conforms more closely to the phonological principles which are beginning to impose themselves in modern linguistics. But to explain my leanings in this regard it is necessary to add a few general remarks on the principles in question, which is all the more appropriate in that we are concerned here with a point of fundamental importance not only for Japan but also for all countries where a new way of writing the language is under consideration.

Recently, several famous linguists (the “*cercle linguistique*” of Prague, Trubetzkoy, Sapir, Jones, Palmer and others) have established a distinction between phonetics and phonology. Those two terms, as they are understood at present<sup>(3)</sup>, can be defined as follows. *Phonetics* are concerned with the study of the sounds employed in

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(1) On the development of this chaotic system, the first chapter of “An Historical Grammar of Japanese” by G. B. Sansom, Oxford, 1928, should be read.

(2) On these questions, please see, in addition to several pamphlets by A. Tanakadate, the pamphlet by the Philological Society of Tokyo Imperial University, “Concerning the Romanization of Japanese”, 1930, and above all Harold E. Palmer, “The Principles of Romanization with Special Reference to the Romanization of Japanese”, Tokyo 1930.

(3) In the past these terms were employed in several different senses.

human language; their physiological production by the anatomical organs and the acoustic impression they make upon the ear. The system of those sounds is universal, since the speech organs are essentially the same everywhere, and it is possible to study those sounds objectively even without understanding the language in which they occur. *Phonology*, on the contrary, is concerned with the particular characteristics of a language or dialect considered separately. Each language has its own system. We find in fact that certain sounds which, considered objectively, appear noticeably different, can, in a given language, be used indifferently, either always, either under certain conditions, or before or after certain other sounds, whereas, in another language, they cannot be interchanged in this way without inevitably producing misunderstanding. What has a definite value in terms of meaning in one language can be regarded as negligible in another. We describe as *phonemes* sounds which can play a discriminatory part in terms of meaning in the particular structure of a given language. In a similar way, there are distinctions of length, stress and intonation which play a decisive part in one language, but which the inhabitants of another country do not notice at all. If now we wish to establish for any language an orthography capable of corresponding to the legitimate demands of those who speak it, we must take into account the phonological individuality of that language and find the most convenient way of marking what is identical for the native linguistic feeling, even if objectively and for a foreigner several different sounds are involved<sup>(1)</sup>.

Let us summarise the main ideas of this Introduction. In order to find the best way to apply the Roman alphabet to a language which has not yet used it, we must become completely familiar with what constitutes the individuality of the language in question and

(1) In Japanese, the Nipponsiki system is phonologically right in writing *ta, ti, tu* for what Hepburn is phonetically right in writing *ta, chi, tsu*. By not indicating in the spelling certain changes which are automatic for the native user of the language, the Nipponsiki system makes possible, among other things, a very simple way of presenting the conjugating of verbs, the relation between transitive and intransitive verbs, the alternations called *nigori*, etc. (vide *Pocket Handbook of Japanese*, 2nd Edition, Tokyo, 1928, p. 11 et seq.) In a word, this system brings out very clearly the morphological and semantic structure of the language.

know completely its phonological structure. For all the important nuances of the system under review, we must seek to discover the most practical notations always bearing in mind the imperfections of the Roman alphabet and supplementing it, in case of need, with diagrams or diacritic symbols or finally with the special letters used by phoneticians (*vide* the publications of the International Phonetics Association and the report of the Copenhagen Conference of 1925). But a man with a practical mind will always remember that these supplementary symbols create difficulties when it comes to telegraphing, printing and using an ordinary typewriter; sometimes, then, we must make do with a more or less satisfactory compromise. The Roman alphabet is a unit but its applications are very varied.

The universal introduction of Roman letters is full of difficulties and cannot be achieved all at once in every country. But, by and large, the difficulties are not insurmountable and the advantages will be very great for the nations able to conquer them.

—*Dossiers de la Coopération intellectuelle*, League of Nations, 1934.



# SPEECH IN HONOUR OF VILHELM THOMSEN<sup>1</sup>

In the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters

January 7, 1922<sup>2</sup>

[When Otto Jespersen submitted his book "Language, Its Nature, Development and Origin" (Allen & Unwin, London 1922) to the Royal Academy, he finished his speech by addressing the following to Professor Vilhelm Thomsen, President of the Academy.]

I have dedicated my book to our honoured President, my well-loved and admired teacher Professor Vilhelm Thomsen as a poor part-payment of that debt of gratitude which I, as well as all other living Danish linguists, owe to the Grand Old Man of our subject. It is not the first time I have thought of dedicating one of my works to Vilhelm Thomsen. On the contrary, the thought has several times been in my mind when I was planning or compiling a new book that I should like to offer it to him publicly as a homage. But every time when the book went through the ordeal of proof-reading, when the author sees his work again after a lapse of some time and reviews it more critically than he did before—each time I have at this stage

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<sup>1</sup> Vilhelm Thomsen was born in Randers in Jutland (also Otto Jespersen's native town) in 1842. In 1867 he took his M. A., in 1869 his doctor's degree, his thesis being "Den gotiske sprogklasses indflydelse på den finske" ("The Influence of the Germanic Language Group on the Finnic"). In 1875 he was appointed Docent, in 1887 Professor of Comparative Linguistics at the University of Copenhagen. In 1909 he was elected President of the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters and in 1912 he was made Knight of the Elephant, thus receiving the highest Danish order. He died in 1927.

Main works: his thesis of 1869, "The Relations between Ancient Russia and Scandinavia and the Origin of the Russian State" (1876), "Berøringer mellem de finske og de baltiske (litauisk-lettiske) Sprog" (Contacts between the Finnic and the Baltic (Lithuanian-Lettish) Languages) (1890-93), "Inscriptions de l'Orkhon déchiffrées" (1896) (published in Danish in 1893), "Sprogvidenskabens Historie" (The History of Linguistics) (1902), "Samlede Afhandlinger" (Collected Papers) I-IV (1918-31). His paper on the palatal law found in 1877 was not printed until 1920 (in the Collected Papers). [Note by Mr. Niels Haislund]

<sup>2</sup> Translated from Danish by Mrs. Helen Fogh.



been so dissatisfied with my product that I did not find it worthy to bear the name of Vilhelm Thomsen on one of the first pages. This time, however, I thought that now I must do something serious about it if I was ever going to dedicate a work to him, and that I should hardly ever write anything that was more worthy of him than this volume in which I have gathered together all the essentials which I have thought about and studied during all the many years since as an undergraduate I sat in lecture room No. 1 and listened to his lectures on linguistics. My disciple relationship has lasted many years, and I may add that it began before I myself was able to attend his lectures, as one of the first things I did when I began to study languages was to copy from a friend's notebook the lectures which Thomsen had given during the immediately preceding years on the history of the Romance languages. These notes still stand to-day in a place of honour on a book-shelf in my study beside Diez's grammar, and I still consider them as my real introduction to linguistics and the scientific method. Since then I have always considered myself first of all as Thomsen's pupil, even when (as also in the greater part of the present book) I have ventured into fields which he has not treated himself, and even when he, as nearly always in his published works, concentrated on subjects of which I have only a very superficial knowledge. However much I have learnt from other linguists both at home and abroad, it is to Vilhelm Thomsen that I owe the greatest debt of my life as a linguist, and I know with certainty that the same applies to many other linguists and philologists. We all look up to Vilhelm Thomsen with admiration and gratitude.

I remember when I told the headmaster of my old school, Carl Berg, that I was going to study languages, that he regretted that I was not going to have as my teacher his late friend, K. J. Lyngby, but Vilhelm Thomsen instead: "he is so dignified and unapproachable." When I got to know Thomsen I often thought of this description which was obviously meant as a censure. I saw that it contained some truth, but I have never met in him anything "stiff" in the sense that he was unsympathetic or considered himself better than others. On the contrary, like all my fellow students I have always met with an understanding and kindness which could only do good. But Thomsen is "unapproachable" in the sense that he considers

himself too good to become involved in much of that pettiness which sometimes is to be found even among scholars; he is far above envy of other scholars, and above that obstinacy and priority-seeking which results in so much polemical controversy; he is not afraid of criticising the opinions of others, and can at times give his views in rather sharp terms, but he is never personal; every word is deliberate, and the full weight of his pure objectivity and the brilliancy of his knowledge leave his opponents without an answer. When Thomsen has said something one can usually assume that all doubtful points have been settled and done with.

Now that Vilhelm Thomsen has reached the age of eighty the Royal Academy has quite naturally wished to honour him, and I know that I speak not only for myself but on behalf of the whole Academy and every Danish philologist and linguist when I offer him our warmest thanks for the admirable work he has carried out during his long life. We admire in him not only those qualities which made him the obvious choice for President of this Academy—that thoroughness with which he has studied languages of such various types and in every case succeeded in getting hold of the essential and characteristic points—that scholarly ingenuity which has thrown light into many dark corners of the history of languages and peoples—that clarity with which he has traced the effects of similar sound relations of the palatals in such different languages as Indian, Romance and Danish—the brilliant insight with which he has disentangled the complicated and difficult conditions brought about by prehistoric contacts between the Finns and a number of neighbouring peoples—the unique astuteness with which at one stroke he solved the centuries old puzzle of the Siberian runic monuments and deciphered these strange ancient Turkish inscriptions of which previously not one single letter was known, not even the language in which they were written, with the same skill as if they were written in Latin or some other well-known language—we admire, I say, not alone all this in Vilhelm Thomsen which has made him a scholar of outstanding ability, but also his fine and noble humanity which makes everyone who knows him regard him with the warmest feelings of affection and respect.

Dear Vilhelm Thomsen, we wish you many more happy and

contented years working for the benefit of learning and in honour of our country.

—*Gads Danske Magasin*, February, 1922.

## VILHELM THOMSEN'S INTERPRETATION OF THE ORKHON INSCRIPTIONS<sup>1</sup>

In Southern Siberia and Northern Mongolia beside the river Orkhon and the upper reaches of the Yenisei, near the ruins of the ancient towns of Karakorum and Kara-Balghassun there are to be found a number of mysterious inscriptions which for some time have attracted the attention of scholars, though none has been able to unveil their meaning. In 1890 and 91 expeditions were sent there both from Finland and Russia, and the results of their investigations are now available in the form of magnificent volumes with detailed pictures of the stones and reproductions of the inscriptions. The two most important monuments were inscribed on three sides with mysterious signs; on the fourth side an inscription in Chinese told that the one stone was raised on January 28th, 733, in memory of a mighty Khan who had died two years previously, and that the other was in memory of his brother who died in 734; but that was all that was known. The Chinese texts, judging by their smaller dimensions and for other reasons, could not be assumed to be direct translations of the mysterious inscriptions and of these not a single sign could be read. It was not even known in which language they were written, and every ingenious method which was used to compare these rune-like signs with all the different alphabets in the world in order to discover similarities and clues seemed to be a waste of effort. It was a mystery, it remained a mystery, and it seemed as if it should be a mystery for ever.

At this point our fellow Dane and linguistic genius, Professor Vilhelm Thomsen, began—to use his own expression—to “toy with” these inscriptions; and shortly afterwards (last December), he was able to inform the world that he had now succeeded in deciphering the inscriptions in all their essentials.

I shall now try to give a slight idea of the astute way in which

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<sup>1</sup> Translated from Danish by Mrs. Helen Fogh.

he went to work ; the thought process which enabled him to decipher the inscriptions is akin to that which a detective uses (perhaps more in fiction than in real life) to draw conclusions from small things which put him on the track of a cunning criminal, and if I may be allowed for once to compare big things with little ones, then it also resembles the mental process which solves logogriffs. A logogriff in a distant Asiatic language, perhaps one of the many languages already known over there, or perhaps one of those unknown languages which have since become extinct without leaving kith and kin. One needs courage to tackle such a task.

The first thing to be decided was the order in which the signs were to be read ; it was easy enough to see that they must be read downwards just as Chinese signs ; but were the perpendicular rows to be read from right to left or vice versa ? Everyone had hitherto supposed that they should be read from the left ; the argument which supports this assumption is, however, so absurd that it falls apart at a touch and only goes to show how fumbling and awkward the attempts were to solve these problems until Thomsen's firm hand took hold of them. He immediately pointed out that the other direction is the only right one ; here, as often later, he took advantage of the fact that certain parts are common to both inscriptions, though not in such a way that they are identical row for row ; what is uppermost in the one can be lower down in the other row. A detailed comparison of these parts shows, however, that the words would be queerly jumbled if the rows were to be read from the left, while they agree admirably if we start from the other end. I can perhaps make this clear in the following scheme where each letter stands for a word ; suppose that in two inscriptions we find the groups :

in the one	in the other
V M	D B
I P	C O
S D	V M
E C	I P

Then there would be only a slight agreement if we read from the left : VISEMPDC and DCVIBOMP, but assuming the opposite and reading from the right, we obtain the row MPDCVI common to both ; the writing then must be read from right to left. Strange that no

one has thought of that before; for really it is very simple—when you first have your attention drawn to it. There is an eternal truth in the saying that it often needs a genius to point out the simplest things.

Then comes the determination of the meaning of the individual runes; there are in all 38 signs and that is too few for us to suppose that it is syllabic writing in the true sense of the word; even less can it be ideography as in Chinese. On the other hand it can hardly either be true alphabetic writing with a sign for each sound; there are so many signs that we must suppose that one and the same sound must often be able to be reproduced by two or perhaps more signs, an assumption which, of course, complicates the problem. Are there separate vowel signs, or are the vowels understood as is the case in many systems of writing? Thomsen here invented an ingenious method; he assumes that when we have a sign group of the formula 1. 2. 1, i. e. where the same letter occurs twice with another between the two, then 2 must be a consonant if 1 is a vowel and vice versa. This is the case in every language; in Danish, for example, groups such as *tit*, *ere*, *pap*, *ele*, etc. are frequent, while groups such as *sts* are very seldom found. By collecting all the groups of this type which occur Thomsen was convinced that three definite signs must be vowels, and the rest consonants. This assumption was further confirmed by the discovery that in the common parts of the two inscriptions the method of writing a word varies several times in such a way that one of these signs is found in one of the inscriptions, but not in the other; the only explanation for this can be that the vowel signs are sometimes written and sometimes missed out.

That is to say, the three signs are vowels; but which three vowels? All the available material was reviewed and it appeared that there were certain rules for the connection of the vowels with the consonants; it is not every consonant which can be joined to every vowel; and the occurrence of the vowels indicates that we are dealing with a language that has "vowel harmony", such as Turkish and several languages related to it, in which, for example, the plural of *aga* (father) is *aga-lar*, but of *ev* (house) is *ev-ler*. This somehow suggests that the language is Turkish or related to it—as was also indicated by many of the names appearing in the Chinese

inscriptions, although Chinese is often more suitable for disguising foreign names than for reproducing them exactly. In accordance with the occurrence of the vowels the supposition was then made that one was *u*, the second *i*, while the third was at first thought to be *e*; later it has appeared that it must be *ö* or *ü*.

A statistical plan of the consonants and their groupings led to certain assumptions as to their classification; some must be stops (such as *p*, *t*, *k*), others nasal sounds and so on. Because of the way in which sounds are formed we find that certain elementary laws for the grouping of consonants are observed in all languages; at the beginning of words we find, for example, *kr*, *kl*, *pr*, *pn*, etc., but not *rk*, *lk*, *rp*, *np*, and so on, which, however, could easily occur within a word. But in this way only the type of the consonant and not its individuality can be determined.

To get something to work on it seemed the most obvious thing to search for words which might be the proper names mentioned in the Chinese texts; that was the way in which the hieroglyphics had been deciphered. But this search long proved vain; now that the whole inscription can be read, we can also see that most of these proper names do not occur on the stones.

There was, however, a word which Thomsen noted specially, because it occurred so frequently, sometimes alone, sometimes with certain additions, often at the beginning of sections or other prominent places which led him to believe that it must be the title of the Khan concerned, which was given in Chinese as "the heavenly Kagan". The last letter was that which Thomsen took to be an *i*, and he was therefore led to read the word as "tengri", a word which means "Heaven, God", common to Mongolian and all Turkish languages. Another word which often occurred on the one, but never on the other stone, was after much hesitation identified with the name of the Khan, given by the Chinese as *K'ieuh-tü'k)-k'in*; his name was, however, as Thomsen now has pointed out, but could not know at that time: *Kül-tigin*. These two words provided the key to a third which occurred extremely frequently and which is none other than the well-known word *Türk*, which confirmed the theory that the inscriptions were written by Turks. Now, by inserting the values he had found for certain letters, Thomsen was able to recognise more and

more pure Turkish words; thus, one by one, the hitherto mysterious letters were deciphered; one link led to another and finally our linguistic genius could give his findings on this mystery of which a short time before not the least was known and say that the inscriptions are written in an Eastern Turkish dialect, which is closely related to Uigurian; the value of each sign can be demonstrated exactly; there are four vowel signs, besides the three mentioned above, also one for *a*, which is usually omitted; nearly every consonant is written in a different way according as it is placed beside a front or a back vowel; some signs represent groups of consonants as *nd* or *ld*.

A sceptic may perhaps ask how we can know that it is the correct solution which has been found. The most important and conclusive proof against such scepticism is, of course, that by inserting the values given by Thomsen to the letters we can obtain a meaning from the inscription, and an understandable language should emerge; and we have obtained that. So far Thomsen has published (in French) only the description of the method by which he succeeded in deciphering the stones, the alphabet and a short fragment from the inscriptions; the complete reading and interpretation he is having published at the moment for the Finno-Ugrian Society in Helsingfors; but the Russian specialist in Turkish linguistics, Radloff, has after receiving Thomsen's paper, used its results for a transcription and translation of the inscriptions, which he has already published with somewhat headlong zeal so as to obtain some part of the honour for the deciphering which, on his own admission, has been possible only through the perspicacity of our countryman. But the fact that the readings of the two linguists agree in all essentials is, of course, a sure guarantee of the correctness of Thomsen's results. Another proof is that the Turkish inscriptions contain what is to be expected on reading the Chinese; and, lastly, it is not without interest that one of the formulas Thomsen has found in them, in which the Khan is spoken of as he "who has been in Heaven", "who has brightened Heaven", "who has found happiness in Heaven", also occurs in another inscription with quite other signs (Uigurian), where Radloff has been able to read: "the wise and august Khan who has found happiness in Heaven."

It is obvious to compare the reading of these inscriptions with



two of the most remarkable feats of learning of our century: the deciphering of the hieroglyphics and of the cuneiform writings. Of course the new discovery has not such far-reaching consequences as the two others, each of which has given us an extremely important insight into the history and way of life of the ancient cultures and a greater knowledge of the cradle of our civilisation; we could not expect so much from the Orkhon inscriptions. But if we look at the subjective aspect of the case—the thought process on which the deciphering depended—then Thomsen must be said to be on a level with the most celebrated names in the two other fields.

For although both the hieroglyphics and the cuneiform writings present special difficulties which the Orkhon writing with its purer phonetic character does not, it must be borne in mind that Thomsen has not had such a help as the Egyptologists had in the Rosetta stone with its Greek translation of the same text in both hieroglyphics and Demotic writing, and that the deciphering of both the hieroglyphics and the cuneiform writings occupied many linguists for a long time, so that each individual scholar made only a little more progress than his predecessor.

Vilhelm Thomsen has had no predecessor in his field; he came, he saw, and he found the answer.

—*Illustreret Tidende* (No. 31), 1894.

## KARL VERNER<sup>1</sup>

### SOME PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS

IN Karl Adolf Verner who died on the 5th November 1896 at the age of 50, Denmark has lost one of her most famous men. Here at home he was little known except in a narrow circle of students of linguistics; he could never prevail on himself to make public appearances and took very little part in social life; even among those who in the course of their studies in the field of the old Gothic languages make constant use of Verner's Law to explain this form or that, there are many younger men who never saw him. His huge form was perhaps best known in a restaurant of the fourth rank in the Frederiksberggade where he arrived every day very late for his principal meal, but the master-artisans, who knew 'the professor' there and greeted him as their fellow habitu  , had but an imperfect idea of his scientific importance.

On the other hand, if one travelled round Europe as a young student of languages, one might be certain that one of the first questions put to one was about Verner, and not unfrequently one was put in a difficulty by the question "How is it then that he doesn't write anything?" And it would be no difficult task to find in the scientific literature of the last twenty years a score of passages in which Verner's Law is spoken of with some eulogistic adjective—generally 'brilliant' or 'epoch-making'. In one the significance of his discovery for linguistics is compared with that which Columbus's first voyage across the Atlantic had for the history of the world.

In what did this scientific importance consist? In a single paper

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<sup>1</sup> The popular Danish monthly *Tilskueren*, January 1897. Here translated with some shortenings and a few minor alterations.

of thirty-four papers in the 23rd volume of the *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Sprachforschung*, dated July 1875 and bearing the modest title *Eine ausnahme der ersten lautverschiebung* ('An exception to the first sound-shift'). From that paper one reckons generally a new period in comparative linguistics. But when one heard Verner himself speak of the birth of his discovery, one could not but think it a rather everyday affair. I will try to reproduce his account, though I am conscious that I cannot give the least impression of the peculiar, quite individual and free-and-easy style or the drily humorous tone in which his story was told.<sup>1</sup>

"I was living at Aarhus (Verner's birthplace) and was not particularly well at the time. One day I was inclined to have an afternoon nap, and I lay down and got a book to send me to sleep. It happened to be Bopp's *Comparative Grammar*, and you know that the Sanskrit words are there printed very prominently, so that one can't help seeing them. I turned up a passage and there the two words *pitár* and *bhrátar* stared me in the face, and it struck me that it was strange that the one word had a *t* in the Germanic languages and the other a *th*, represented in the difference between modern German *vater* and *bruder*, and then I noticed the accent-marks on the Sanskrit words. You know that the brain works best when one is on the point of falling asleep, it is then that one gets new ideas and is unimpeded by all the usual associations which keep us busy when we are wide-awake. Well, the idea struck me, might it not be the original accent that accounted for the difference in the consonants? And then I fell asleep. But that same evening I had to write a letter to Julius Hoffory. At that time we kept up a lively correspondence on linguistic questions, and as it was my turn to write, and I had nothing else to tell him, I wrote about the accent. Next morning I came to think of it again and it seemed that it could not be right, and I was just about to write to Hoffory not to bother himself about all that nonsense, when I thought again, well, let him cudgel his brains to refute it. But that day when I was about to take my nap, I happened to light upon Scherer's *Zur geschichte der deutschen sprache* ('Contributions to the history of the German lan-

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<sup>1</sup> To Professor Heusler and myself one evening at the 'Tivoli'.

guage') and there I saw his explanation that the irregular sound-shift had probably first occurred with the words in most common use, and this I saw at once was nonsense, for could one imagine the old Germans really using the words *fadar* or *modar* more frequently than *brothar*? And so I set about seeing if the Sanskrit-accent which Bopp had given was really right, and when it proved so, I investigated further and at once found one example after another where there was agreement."

Verner's Law had now been found, and shortly after he was able to set the whole out clearly in a letter to Vilhelm Thomsen, whom he asked to tell him if he found the whole thing nonsense. He wrote that *prima facie* he had had great doubts about it, but when he went over it again, he could not find the least mistake. Thomsen saw at once the wide importance of the discovery and urged Verner earnestly to publish it, and this not in the journal which Thomsen himself edited, the *Tidsskrift for filologi*, but in German. Without strong pressure on the part of Thomsen and others it would not have been possible to overcome Verner's reluctance to go into print, but finally the paper was finished and sent off from Danzig: Verner had in the meantime obtained a travelling scholarship from the University as he wanted to examine the remains of the language of the Cashubs, which according to Schleicher was the only West-Slavic language that had kept the old free accent, but which turned out to be a peculiar Polish dialect.

While he was still among the Cashubs, he received one day a postcard from Müllenhoff, at that time one of the leading German linguists and well-known for his caustic pen, he was disposed to utter some strong language, but merely when he was blaming someone; strong praise was not his affair. The more astounded was therefore Verner to see that the postcard described his paper as one which had brought light into places where everybody before had walked in impenetrable darkness,—I do not remember the exact words, but they were to that effect: Verner repeated the whole card in German by heart. But the communication was in one way noticeable; it was not written on the card supplied by the post office, but on a piece of paper pasted on upon it. This roused Verner's curiosity and he carefully got the paper off, and read beneath it the original message,

merely "Thank you for what you have sent. Müllenhoff." Either then Müllenhoff had written that before reading the paper, or perhaps at the first reading it had not made any striking impression upon him, but he had afterwards come to see something great in it. Consequently Verner conceived the desire to take Berlin on his journey homewards to thank Müllenhoff in person for the great encouragement his praise had given him. But he had spent nearly every penny he possessed "and all the time that I spent with the Cashubs, I had never seen a washerwoman, so you can imagine how I looked." Meanwhile he travelled by train fourth class to Berlin, went to Müllenhoff's house and asked if the professor was at home, but Müllenhoff's daughter who opened the door answered "No" and was about to close the door in the face of the strange figure whom she clearly took for a beggar, when he asked her to convey a greeting from "Dr. Verner aus Kopenhagen". At that name a door opened and Müllenhoff, who had heard everything, came forward to his daughter's great astonishment and heartily welcomed the foreign tramp.

[Here followed in the Danish periodical a popular exposition of Verner's Law, illustrated chiefly by examples from modern Danish and German.]

What was the reason that this paper became more famous than so many others that see the light from time to time in the philological journals?<sup>1</sup> The first thing that contributed to its fame was its safe solid logical construction, which would entitle it to take its place in a treatise on scientific method, just as Wells's theory of dew figures as an example of method in a well-known chapter of J. S. Mill's *Logic*. The composition of the paper is a model, one does not notice the accidental manner, as one might be tempted to say, in which the thought rose to the surface in the brain of its author; so far as I know, Newton does not begin his *Principia* with an account of the historic apple. But Verner carefully presents his case in the most

<sup>1</sup> Verner's work was awarded the Bopp medal of the Academy of Berlin; some few years after he received an honorary degree from the University of Heidelberg.

convincing manner. He dismisses one by one as useless the other conceivable explanations, so that when one comes to the accent, one must say to oneself—: well, if the solution of the riddle is not there, thought must proclaim itself bankrupt. And, lo and behold, everything there is in harmony, so that we wonder at it all as at a beautiful harmonious building.

It is not till the whole verbal system has been explained, that the words turn up by the help of which Verner first found the law, and they now operate as confirmation from outside of what we have already come to believe. And more and more words come of the same convincing force, and when it is done we have a strong feeling that here is something established for all time; there are no holes in the demonstration by which doubt can get leave to steal in. The last twenty years have shown that no one has succeeded in shaking Verner's Law; on the contrary new cases have been added by other, smaller minds, in which the Law has operated, and new words have been brought to light which find their explanation in Verner's Law of Accents.

But it was not merely by the certainty of the demonstration and the clearness of the thought that the paper made its impression; it was also, and fully to the same extent, by the boldness of the thought. Before Newton it had not been supposed possible that the movements of the moon should be governed by the same causes which make things fall here on earth; before Verner the possibility had not been conceived that the fact that a German nowadays pronounces a *t* or a *d* in a word was connected with the manner in which his ancestors some thousands of years ago laid the stress on their words, and that it could be shown by the help of accentual marks in old books brought all the way from India. It was Verner who first made men properly observe the sweeping role which accent plays in all linguistic changes, as he himself put it a few years later: "We are at last on the way to recognize that accent does not, like the accentuation-marks, hover over words in a careless apathy but as their living and life-imparting soul lives in and with the word, and exerts an influence on the structure of the word and thereby of the whole language, such as we seem hitherto to have only had the faintest conception of."

But besides thus calling attention to an important new factor in

the life of language, Verner certainly in a more general way exerted a strong influence on the linguistic investigators of his time by his eager endeavour to explain what had till then been considered exceptions, and so point out order and conformity with law in the development of language. In the winter after the appearance of his paper Verner attended week by week the "kneipabende" ('social evenings') held in the "Caffeebaum" ale-house at Leipzig, along with young German linguistic investigators such as Brugmann, Osthoff, Leskien, Hübschmann, Braune and others (Delbrück and Sievers were frequent guests from Jena). These were the very men who came out soon after as leaders of the so-called "Young Grammarian" school, which came to play a great part in linguistics and had as one of the most important points in its programme the explanation of the apparent exceptions to phonetic laws. We are certainly justified therefore in assuming that Verner played a great part in the emergence of the new movement, even though he never accepted the doctrine in its most pointed form as expressed in the formula "Ausnahmslosigkeit der lautgesetze" ('sound-laws not subject to exceptions').

From 1876 till 1882 Verner had a post in the University Library of Halle. He told me once about a system he proposed for class-marking books; it seemed extraordinarily ingenious, as by help of a few artificially concocted syllables (e. g. 'mulpa') it could be shown exactly where a book belonged to, so that it was the easiest thing in the world not only to insert new books, but whole new branches of science, in their place in the system without any need to change the class-marks of the books already filed. Apart from this I know nothing about these years except what a German linguist once told me that Verner kept himself very much apart from his fellow students and liked to drink his beer in the company of simple people rather than professors and doctors, a trait which we again find in him after his return to Copenhagen.

This took place in 1883 on his appointment to succeed C. W. Smith as reader in Slavic, a post he held till his death (from 1888 as professor extraordinary). Here, as was natural, from the nature of the subject (Russian, Old Bulgarian, Polish, etc.), he had only a few pupils, the number varying probably from one to four. This suited Verner excellently; he is said to have looked comically scared

when one semester he found in his lecture-room a really great crowd: it consisted of students who had calculated that by coming to the University an hour early and taking their seats and waiting in a lecture-room, they could make sure of a good place in Georg Brandes's crowded lecture-room next door, the doors of which were only opened at the close of the preceding lecture. But it did not last many times, before Verner got rid of his apparently large attendance by removing to another lecture-room. So there are not many who can call themselves Verner's pupils; but those who have heard him will certainly always recall the hours spent with him with pleasure and admiration. He came in, gave a friendly nod, and took a chair, setting himself just in front of the bench we sat on,—he never mounted the platform—and so we had the feeling that it was not only a trustworthy guide in matters of science that sat there, but one who was also a good comrade who took a warm interest in us and in our work. It is true we could never get him to examine us,—that was as little in his way as a regular lecture; but it is not to be believed what he could do for his pupils in helping them to grasp the difficult points of Slavic grammar: for the difficulties presented by accent in Russian, he gave us long lists of words neatly written in his minute elegant hand; we might keep them as long as we wanted, to copy them out; if we had asked to keep them for good, he would not have said no, although he had spent an enormous labour on them and had no other copy himself. And then—at times, at any rate—there was something so comically likeable in the free-and-easy style in which he translated for us the Russian authors. He once wrote to me<sup>1</sup> “that *we* (as we cannot imagine to have been the case with Hottentots) speak one language at home in our dressing-gown and slippers, another when we go out in our ordinary clothes, and a third when we have to speak in a tail-coat and white tie.” It was the first kind of language that to Verner was the most natural, I had almost written, the only one he used. I had also a strong impression that at the beginning of the course he put himself about to render all the difficult shades in Russian pronunciation, palatalized consonants and

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<sup>1</sup> In reference to an explanation I had published in my paper on Sound-laws of the shortened pronunciation *fu'r*, *mo'r* which is found for example in *fu'bror* etc. but cannot be extended to words like *fuderlig*, *fuderlø*.



high mid-tongue vowels, but that afterwards, when he knew us better and the lesson went more rapidly, he dropped into a pronunciation more convenient to him, so that the language got a familiar Aarhus ring.

His lectures were never solemn affairs and he was not sorry now and then to spice them with an experience of his own in Russia. So on one occasion—I think it must have been on account of the occurrence in our text of the Russian verb for 'arise'—he plunged into a superbly told description of Easter Eve in Russia, how all the people, having assembled in church, were transported out of themselves at the words "Christ is risen" and all saluted their neighbours, known or unknown, with these two words and the traditional kiss. And then he told how the young men from the Legation, his companions, richly availed themselves of the night's privilege to salute all the pretty girls they met with the resurrection words and a kiss. It was rather late in the morning when he got home and found his landlord's family gathered joyously with lighted candles before the icon of the saint: and the father, who had only with great difficulty kept the strict command to drink no brandy during the fast, sitting with an unusually large dram of his beloved vodka. He gave Verner a nod as he tossed it off saying ecstatically, "Yes, praise God, Christ is risen at last." Verner, as the custom was, received an Easter-egg from each member of the family, and when he finally crept tired out to his bedroom, he would not take off his clothes, but flung himself full length on the sofa without remembering that he had crammed all the eggs into his back-pockets. "That frock-coat was never a frock-coat again."

Verner occupied the first floor of a little villa behind Frederiksborg Gardens—the most absolute bachelor's den I have ever known. When one saw his bookshelves or his table on which books or fragments of books, chess journals, mathematical calculations and many other things lay in a dusty chaos, one could only wonder that in all that disorder he could keep his thoughts so admirably clear. And it was always a pleasure to call on him, even though one was often driven away, sooner than one would have wished, by the unbearable heat which Verner at times kept up in his stove. He himself was always ready for a talk. He liked to tell of the tavern-

life of German scholars, e. g. of the "wet section", formed at a philological congress—and among the members one heard the names of many of the most famous linguistic investigators of Germany: the first byelaw ran "No one may take part in any meeting of the other sections", and the second "No one may go home before one in the morning." Or he told of the German scholar who had never possessed a lamp, because when he got up it was always light enough to see, and when it grew too dark for him to go on working, he went off to his accustomed "kneipe".

It was a still greater pleasure when he got on scientific ground, especially when he developed the thought which occupied him over a stretch of years, that of making speech-sounds visible, so that their most minute elements could be examined—this was before the birth of the school of experimental phonetics. For this purpose he used Edison's phonograph in its old form in which it is driven round by the hand and the impressions of the sound are made on tinfoil. The later instrument with its electrical driving-power and wax cylinder only came out after Verner had begun his experiments, and he also thought that the old one was just as good for his object. The point now was to magnify the microscopical marks on the tin-foil, and for this purpose Verner had constructed an apparatus of which Edison need not have been ashamed; he left the magnifying to be done by the rays of light themselves; meanwhile he sat in one corner of the room with a little telescope which, by means of a pin which followed the tracing of the sound on the tinfoil, turned imperceptibly on an axis; but these minute movements enabled one as one used the telescope to see markedly different points on a measuring-yard set for this purpose by the window. By following the rise and fall of the telescope in a definite portion of time one was then in a position to draw a highly magnified picture of the impressions made in the phonograph. The picture of a quite short Danish word of one syllable produced in Verner's drawing a strip, if my memory serves me, of forty feet long. In order to be able to describe and calculate the sound-curves on his tapes with the necessary accuracy, Verner had to study branches of mathematics with which he had had nothing to do before, and one was dazed when one saw his masses of long calculations. What actually came out of these enormous labours,

apart from the pleasure Verner took in them, I have no idea. Some years after I had seen his apparatus, he gave a lecture on it before the Danish Academy, but his learned colleagues did not succeed in inducing him to print even a short synopsis of his investigations and its results.<sup>1</sup>

In general, Verner did not like having anything printed. Apart from his paper on Sound-shifting (with a supplement on Gradation) and a few reviews he never published anything except some articles on Russian writers in Salmonsens's *Konversationsleksikon*. There was no want of requests from outside; Leskien told me at Leipzig that he had dunned Verner in vain many times for his profound investigations into Slavic accent which he had promised to the proceedings of the Saxon Academy, and no doubt many others had the same experience. Those who knew Verner had therefore long given up hope of seeing anything more from his hand, when one fine day it was rumoured that he had written an article on E. v. d. Recke's book *Store og smaa Bogstaver* ('Big letters and small'; 1888) and though people perhaps thought that the great linguist might have spent his shot on worthier tasks than little questions of orthography, philologists looked forward with pleasure to a powerful refutation of Recke's specious arguments. Meanwhile it never came; the last I heard of the matter was: "Verner has now rewritten his paper for the third time, now it will be printed." But Verner could not master the practical energy necessary in order to get a completed paper printed and published.<sup>2</sup> He who shrank from no trouble when by laborious thinking and extensive investigations he wanted to clear his mind on this or that question that interested him, was indolent and without will-power when he was called upon to carry through any project of practical life.

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<sup>1</sup> [Two letters to Dr. Hugo Pipping of Helsingfors with calculations and a picture of the apparatus are printed in the *Overblik* of the 'Videnskabernes Selskab' for 1913, page 161 ff.]

<sup>2</sup> [It was found after his death in a state which suggested that he must have gone about a long time with the manuscript in his coat pocket. I published it in *Dansk IV*, 1897 p. 82 ff. Printed later in Karl Verner, *Afhandlinger og breve* publ. by the *Selskab for germanisk filologi* 1903, in which will be found a biography of Verner and many interesting letters as well as a description of his apparatus for measuring sounds.]

It was a sign of the same inertia<sup>1</sup> that he took every day as it came and gave little thought to the morrow. When he was among the Cashubs, it was remarked that he sat day after day in taverns taking notes of what people said: as no one of course had any idea that he was pursuing linguistic studies he was taken for a spy and imprisoned, since of course he had not anything in the least resembling papers of legitimation. He had to write to Copenhagen for a passport. But as this was written in Danish and French, neither of which languages was known in Karthaus, he had to act as interpreter in his own case; his translation however was accepted and he obtained permission to continue his studies. In money-matters he was absolutely happy-go-lucky; he must have been an easy prey for beggars and swindlers, as his kind heart did not allow him to say no. But another result was that he found himself at times in very unpleasant situations, which it often amused him to recall. Once when he had to take the train from Moscow to St. Petersburg, though he had been obliged to pawn a watch-chain which he never saw again, he had not a farthing beyond the cost of his ticket, and for his needs on the long journey was dependent on the kindness of his fellow-passengers: but he succeeded in getting on such good terms with the Russian peasants in the carriage that they gladly treated him to what they had with them.

In politics and in most things Verner was a Liberal: in the first few years after the founding of the radical "Studentersamfund" he might now and again be seen at the Saturday discussions in the Badstustræde—of course, merely as a listener. In private too he could occasionally come out with some very cutting remarks on the men and circumstances of the day in Denmark; but in general he was more disposed quietly to take stock of men's goings-on and shily

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<sup>1</sup> I see evidence also of this trait in the following lines of a letter of 1886: "May I take the opportunity of wishing you all success in your plans for effecting a reform in the teaching of languages here in Denmark. But, for God's sake, don't delude yourself into thinking that the task will be an easy one. Classical philology has lain like an incubus on the science of language too long for that. We have only one university, and for more than a generation that university has had only one philological authority of any weight, all our schoolmasters in the linguistic line are therefore fashioned on the last of a teaching-tradition fixed on a blind belief in authority. You won't change this generation: you must let it disappear in accordance with the law of mortality. And that will take some time."

amuse himself with them, than get angry over them. Indeed, once when he was telling of a really dangerous attack of illness he had had—a precursor of the illness that has now taken him from us—I had a strange feeling that he looked on it all as a curious case that had a lively interest for him as a pathological problem, rather than as something that concerned his own life or death.

In science Verner was a living proof that quality counts more than quantity. And even if many when conversation turned on him and what he was might smile and quietly shake their heads at his oddities, it was still easy to see that all who knew him personally liked him, just as all students of language bow themselves in admiration of his rare genius.

—*Linguistica*, 1933.

## PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

MODERN HUMANITIES RESEARCH ASSOCIATION 1920

**M**<sup>Y</sup> first word today must necessarily be the monosyllable *Thanks!* I want to express my profound gratitude to you because you have elected me your President. I shall never forget the feelings with which I received the telegram from your honorary secretary inviting me to become president: it found me after a delay of some days at an out-of-the-way place on the west coast of Jutland, where I had retired, far from civilization and post-offices. The telegram not only surprised me as few things have surprised me in my life, for I had never dreamt of the possibility of having this honour conferred on me, but it also filled me with joy and pride. Afterwards, when the first attack, if I may say so, of vanity had subsided, I began to ask myself more objectively the question what motives could have been in your minds when you came to think of me as President, and I found two which seemed to me to explain, partially at least, your choice on this occasion.

The first of these motives, I take it, is half political. It is the exalted aim of this Association "to unite all who engage in such studies in one world-wide fraternity." Now if this is to be achieved it is important to enlist as many nations as possible, and also, perhaps, to divide the honours as far as possible among several nations. It was only the natural thing to have an Englishman as the first president of a society founded in England and consisting largely of British members; it was equally natural next to go to France and to elect as the second president one belonging to the great nation that has recently borne the brunt of the battle on the same side as Great Britain. But after these two nations had been represented, I suppose some of you may have thought it advisable to look for the third

president among those nations which have not participated in the great war, in order effectively to demonstrate that the Association really aims at being "world-wide" and not only inter-allied, so that it wants, as soon as possible, not, indeed, to forget the world-war—for that of course is impossible for anyone who has lived through the terrible years after 1914—but to efface those after-effects of the great struggle which prove obstacles to the full development of the studies which occupy us. It would obviously be premature now to choose as the president of this Association a German, however meritorious—and many Germans would deserve to be raised to this chair much better than I do—but it is a step in this direction to go to such a neutral country as Denmark. It is my hope that conditions in Europe will be soon improved so far as to render it possible for British and French scholars to meet with their brethren from the Central Powers: I know that it will require a good deal of resignation—on both sides!—but it must be done sooner or later, and the sooner the better for the world at large and for that spirit of research which we all have at heart.

If the first motive for electing me may thus have been the desire to see a neutral president instead of another man belonging to one side of the belligerent nations, I can imagine that a second motive may have been the desire to have a student of language after the first two presidents, both of whom have devoted themselves to the literary side of Modern Humanities. It is no easy matter to be the successor of two eminent men like Sir Sidney Lee, revered as the author of the best biography of Shakespeare and of other excellent work in biography and literary criticism, and M. Gustave Lanson, who combines learning in all fields of French literature with the typical French elegance of form. But it is perhaps easier to follow these first two Presidents when one's own work is in different domains so that a direct comparison is for that reason excluded; the distance between us cannot be exactly measured and you may on that account be less inclined than you might otherwise have been to exclaim, "What a falling-off was there!"

It is customary to speak of the two sides of our studies, language and literature, as being to some extent rivals or even antagonistic. Most scholars specialize in one or the other of these branches, and

it is given only to very few to excel in both. There are, however, such exceptionally gifted scholars: I shall mention two among the great dead, Gaston Paris and Bernhard ten Brink. But apart from such men of genius it is but natural to take more interest in one side than in the other, and that each scholar should choose one field in which to be productive; but that is not the same thing as neglecting the other side altogether. On the whole I think it very wise of most of our universities to have joint professorships of the English (or German, or whatever it is) language and literature, and in the same way to demand of the young candidates that they should have studied both language and literature. For the two things are really inseparable. It is quite true that it is possible to write, say, a readable essay on modern Russian novels without being able to read Dostojevskij and Gorkij in the original; but it is not humanly possible to penetrate into the very essence of a foreign literature without a thorough knowledge of the language in which it is written: there is always something that is lost in a translation of any literary work, though of course more in the case of a lyric poem than of a realistic novel. I would even go so far as to maintain that without a sound knowledge of phonetics no one is able to the fullest extent to enjoy and appreciate a foreign poem, and to a certain degree also the higher forms of literary prose. As human beings are organized, sound and sense cannot be separated without detriment to both.

On the other hand, it may be objected to me that it is quite possible to study language without taking an interest in literature. Here again I say that this is possible with regard to the lower forms of language study only. When the study of language emancipated itself from classical philology, it was often said that the study of language as such had nothing to do with literature, and that the language of a totally illiterate negro tribe presented exactly the same interest to the linguistic student as the language of Homer, nay one may even find it stated that it was more interesting or important than Homer's Greek, because it showed language in its natural state while Homer wrote a highly artificial language. Such utterances may be excused from the first enthusiasm of the new science of language; and there is that much truth in it that any and every language presents a great many interesting features and may throw some light on human



psychology. Therefore, by all means, do not let the study of negro languages be neglected. Still I venture to assert that there are a great many of the most important linguistic problems that can only be faced through a study of language in its highest forms, and that is the language of the most cultured nations and especially of such individuals among those nations as have attained the highest mastery of language, in other words the greatest poets. Many interesting observations may no doubt be made in newspaper advertisements, but a much greater number are to be gathered from the pages of William Shakespeare and Percy Bysshe Shelley.

Here someone may be inclined to say that the works of the great poets are too good to be used for grammatical investigations, and that it will kill the interest in poetry as such to examine the use of verbal forms or of conjunctions, etc. "We murder to dissect," as Wordsworth has it. But surely there is a way to combine enjoyment and research. I do not know whether a botanist is able to make scientific observations of the structure of an asparagus or a strawberry while he is enjoying the taste of it; but I do know from many years' experience that a grammarian is able to make interesting observations on the language of a novel or a piece of poetry while reading it or hearing it recited without these observations interfering with his aesthetic enjoyment. The trouble of course is with noting down one's observations: I have found it a safe plan always to read with a pencil in my hand and to put a little dot in the margin, so small that it does not disfigure the page, but distinct enough to allow me afterwards to find again what had struck me and to enter it on slips. And then there is, of course, always the expedient first to read the book or play as a whole for the sake of its literary value and afterwards to go through it in detail with the eye on those points which one wants to investigate especially. I have also found it possible to observe points of pronunciation while listening to a lecture, etc., without on that account losing the thread of the speaker's ideas or forgetting my interest in the subject-matter. But I must confess that in some cases I have been listening to speeches where the speaker's peculiarities of pronunciation were more absorbing than the thoughts he was expressing. That is just one of the beauties of

phonetic study that it sometimes makes you forget how bored you would otherwise have been in certain people's company.

You will allow me to go through the programme of this Association as shown in its title and to add my own commentary to each of the three parts that make it up: Modern Humanities—Research—Association.

First, then, Modern Humanities. I do not know how far back this word "modern" carries us, but as "Humanities" necessarily implies historic study it cannot evidently be the intention to restrict our task to the most recent period either of language or literature. In accordance with this interpretation divisions of the Association have been formed which deal especially with the medieval literature of this and that country, and that is quite natural. What, then, is it that divides us from other humanistic studies which do not fall under the heading of Modern Humanities? For everybody will agree that our Association could not by any means be made to include the study of Cicero, although his language is only to that of *La Chanson de Roland* what that is to the language of Victor Hugo. I think that what is characteristic of "Modern Humanities" is nothing but the close, intimate, uninterrupted contact with the life of our own days, and this immediate connexion with actual life is or should be our pride, for it is this which gives to our study its patent of nobility.

It is not so very long since the study of modern languages and literatures was looked down upon by classical scholars and others as if it were a second rank study and must always be inferior to the study of Latin and Greek. Many universities had no professors of English or French, but only lecturers (dozenten, maîtres de conférences, or whatever they might be called), and students were advised to take up the nobler classical languages rather than the despised modern ones. But happily this is changed now in most countries, and it is universally recognized that our studies require exactly the same mental capacities as the older ones. They have been placed on a footing of equality with Greek and Latin in all except the most backward states. But I do not scruple to say that we should not be content with that position of equality, but claim that our study in some respects ranks even higher than classical studies, and the

reason for that superiority is to be found just in that immediate contact with actual life of which I spoke. This allows us to get nearer the real truth in many respects than is possible with those studies which have for their basis old manuscripts removed by many intermediaries from the author himself and consequently precluding us from attaining to the same degree of certainty which is possible for more recent periods.

This is true of literature: there can be no doubt that the student of recent literature has many advantages which his colleague in the older fields must envy him; his biographical sources flow more abundantly, he knows much more about the social milieu in which the works were produced, about the way in which they were hailed at their birth, etc., and all that constitutes an immense superiority, if this is not to be measured by the false standard of the kind of ingenuity that throws out guesses at truth which can never be verified or controlled. But similar considerations hold good with regard to language study as well, though it has not always been recognized.

Most of the masters of the comparative study of languages have been almost exclusively engaged in the study of ancient languages, Sanskrit, Zend, Greek, Latin, Old Bulgarian, Gothic, etc., and have paid very little attention to modern languages, least of all to living languages, a fact that has had many deleterious consequences which it would lead me too far to point out in this place. Even professors of modern languages spent more of their own and their pupils' time on Old High German and Old English than on the language as we may hear it round us every day. Max Müller, who was "Taylorian Professor of Modern Languages" at Oxford, characteristically wrote in 1853: "I dare hardly venture to undertake a course of Greek literature, for my subject must always be more or less in connexion with modern languages. This is possible with titles like 'declension,' 'conjugation,' etc., *including a few words about modern formations, and then concentrating on Greek, Latin, and Sanskrit.*" Even much later many of those who spoke in the highest terms of the necessity of basing the theory of the development of language on the study of actual living speech, paid little more than lip-service to this study and were mainly occupied with antiquarian philology. Some of them, to judge from their actual practice, agreed with Miss Blimber in Dick-

ens's novel: "She was dry and sandy with working in the graves of deceased languages. None of your live languages for Miss Blimber."

Among the first who took the study of living speech seriously, I must mention the German Eduard Sievers, the Norwegian Johan Storm, and especially Henry Sweet. My own work, and that of many others, would have been nothing were it not for the initiation and inspiration due to what these three eminent men wrote in the 'seventies and 'eighties. Each of them also, Sweet perhaps even more than the two others, showed that it was possible to combine minute observation of present-day language with a sound knowledge of previous speech-periods and thus to gain a real insight into the essence of linguistic history.

It should never be forgotten that all linguistic study that is based on books and manuscripts is unrealistic and places one thing between the observer and his object which is apt to disfigure the object and blur his vision, if he is not trained through previous immediate study of the spoken language to eliminate the errors caused by the medium of writing. We may here quote Shakespeare:

Why? all delights are vaine, and that most vaine  
Which with paine purchas'd doth inherit paine,  
As painefully to poare vpon a booke  
To seeke the light of truth, while truth the while  
Doth falsely blinde the eyesight of his looke.

Sweet also was one of the first to recognize the vital importance for the study of living languages of adequate phonetic texts. I well remember how I missed good phonetic texts when I took up the study of English: we had then a couple of pages only by Sweet and not quite so much by Ellis; otherwise we had to be contented with transcriptions of the older kind in which each word was given in its dictionary pronunciation and no account was taken of the way in which words are joined and modified in natural connected speech. Then Sweet came out with his *Elementarbuch des gesprochenen Englisch* (1885), and since then the number of reliable phonetic texts has been constantly increasing, and now fortunately the student has a great many excellent books to choose between and—which is very important—to compare so as to gain an insight into what points are common to all educated English people and what points are not;

with these differences of pronunciation he will do well to familiarize himself, for no one man can be an adequate representative of a speech-community constituted of so many different strata and elements as a modern nation. In one way Sweet's first book has never been surpassed nor even superseded, for all recent books of English transcriptions either give a number of anecdotes, which are not to my mind the best texts from which to learn a language, or else they take literary selections, while Sweet took as his chief source the language as he actually heard it spoken in everyday life. In other languages, too, the student will now find reading matter transcribed by competent phoneticians; even for such a far-off language as Chinese we have now two phonetic readers, one by Mr Daniel Jones and a native scholar, and one by the eminent Swede Karlgren. Thus the student of phonetics is now far better off than ten or twenty years ago, but still very much work remains to be done in this field.

I must here also mention the excellent work done by *l'Association Phonétique Internationale*. This society has not found favour with the Poet Laureate, who has even gone out of his way to stamp it as an Anglo-Prussian Society. As a matter of fact it was founded by my friend Paul Passy and myself, and neither of us can be described as Anglo-Prussian, as he is an ardent French patriot, and I am at any rate no Prussian; and it soon grew to be a fully international society in the best spirit of world-wide cooperation for intellectual purposes. Nor were the members tied down to one particular style of pronunciation either in English or any other language, so that if Dr. Bridges had done us the honour to join the Phonetic Association, he would have been free in its periodical, *Le Maître Phonétique*, to oppose any of the pronunciations he dislikes and to advocate the distinctest pronunciation of naturally indistinct vowels. He might also there have given free scope to his homophonophobia. But now, unfortunately, the War has for the time being put an end to this as well as to other international societies. The *Association Phonétique* was not exclusively a research society, but had also practical teaching in view, but I think it would not be a bad idea to merge it into this Association, or to form a subdivision of the Modern Humanities Research Association for the purpose of encouraging research in phonetics.

I am afraid I have laid more stress than some of you would like on that part of Modern Humanities which is concerned with the most modern period, and I hasten to say that my sympathy is no less with those who would extend the word "Modern" even so far back as to Beowulf—the main point to my mind is that we recognize Beowulf as well as recent slang as parts of one great whole which it is impossible for one man to embrace with equal knowledge, but which forms in its totality the object of our joint activity. Let each man specialize as much as he likes, and let us by all means encourage special study in many branches, but our Association as such must have the widest horizon possible. The individual, too, will do well while specializing not to lose sight of the greater whole of which his study forms only one part. I remember reading in an American newspaper the following conversation about a doctor: "So he's a specialist. What is his speciality?" The answer was, "The nostrils," which elicited the further question: "Which nostril?" It is impossible to do really fruitful research work in one field without a wide outlook to other fields: no one can study Shelley without knowing much about the materialistic and revolutionary French literature of the eighteenth century; and no one can specialize on Old English diphthongs without taking into consideration Gothic and Old High German or without an adequate knowledge of diphthongs in the living speech of the twentieth century—and, as I have already said, language cannot be properly studied without literature, nor literature without language. Specialization is good and natural and necessary, but should not cramp the mind, and it must be one of the objects of our Association to enlarge the mind through the cooperation of many scholars, each with his own speciality.

So much for my interpretation of the words *Modern Humanities*. I next come to the word *Research*. I take this to mean the endeavour to find out truth, not for one's own private benefit, but for the benefit of the whole community. It is thus opposed to that kind of scholarship which consists solely in the quiet enjoying of good literature and which has its classical representative in Gissing's Henry Ryecroft—that intellectual sybarite who never thinks of taking the trouble of writing books or papers for the benefit of others, but only of sucking the greatest amount of honey from other people's labours. The real

research student, on the other hand, is constantly thinking of the way in which his own labours may be made useful to others and how through the publication of his results he may promote the interests of everyone engaged in similar studies; and if he does his work well, he may not only procure to his readers that enjoyment which is always the result of a well-conducted investigation, but also in some cases destroy wide-spread errors of far-reaching importance. You will allow me to mention one field in which sound sober-minded research work is needed in all countries.

Professor H. C. Wyld has recently, in his able and interesting inaugural lecture on "English Philology in English Universities" given a splendid stimulus to research in this country. Here he rightly remarks that there is really a wide-spread interest in English Philology among the general public: questions on etymology, on pronunciation and grammatical usage, etc., possess "a strange fascination for the man in the street, but almost everything that he thinks and says about it is incredibly and hopelessly wrong. There is no subject which attracts a larger number of cranks and quacks than English Philology. In no subject, probably, is the knowledge of the educated public at a lower ebb." What Professor Wyld here says is probably true for every other country as well; at any rate I can assure you that in Denmark, too, the interest of the general public in questions of their mother-tongue is in inverse ratio to their knowledge. And this is really quite natural. Questions of correct spelling, correct pronunciation, correct grammar are often important in everyday practical life, but the standard by which these things are measured, the whole manner of viewing such questions depends for nearly everybody on the way in which his own mistakes were corrected at the age when the greatest number of them were committed, that is before the beginning of regular schooling and in the first school-years. Now it is unavoidable that those persons who correct the mistakes of such children have not as a rule made a profound study of their own mother-tongue or of scientific principles of linguistic correctness; the consequence is that most of those people who in later life pronounce their infallible verdicts in these matters do so from insufficient data and starting from principles which hardly deserve this proud name and at any rate are different from those recognized

by the masters of linguistic science. Here a vast amount of educational work is required to do away with narrow-mindedness based on ignorance and to substitute sound theories based on research. Even those who write books on errors in the use of their mother-tongue and who ought to have studied their subject in order to guide their countrymen do not always seem to have a real grasp of the fundamental principles or to have investigated the usage of the best authors. If they give quotations these are chiefly gathered from recent newspapers and third or fourth rate writers of the day. I had recently occasion to look into the use of the relative pronoun *whom* in combinations like "We feed children whom we think are hungry."<sup>1</sup> Hodgson (*Errors in the Use of English*, 1881—one of the best books on the subject) mentions it as a "heinous and common error" and gives twenty-three quotations, twenty-one of which are from unknown writers, one is from Disraeli and one, it seems, from Milton, though, as printed there, it may be the elder Disraeli's rendering of Milton's words. In H. W. and F. G. Fowler's *The King's English* (1906) the phenomenon is mentioned on p. 93 as "the gross error" and illustrated by nine quotations (two from Dickens, one from Corelli, one from Galt, and five from various newspapers). But these books give no information about the extent to which this use of "whom" is found in good literature: from my own reading, which, after all, is not so very extensive, and in which I have not paid *special* attention to this more than to other syntactical phenomena, I have noted one example from Chaucer, one from Caxton, six from Shakespeare, one from the Authorized Version of the Bible, one from Walton, two from *The Vicar of Wakefield*, two from Franklin's *Autobiography*, one from Shelley, one from Keats, one from Kingsley, one from Darwin, and six from various recent writers and newspapers. As there seems to be thus a pretty universal inclination in such composite relative clauses to use "whom", and as this inclination weighs the more heavily because the general tendency in English goes in the opposite direction, towards using the form "who" also as an object, one may be excused for coming to doubt the validity of the grammarians' estimation of the idiom. They say that it should

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[<sup>1</sup> See now *The Philosophy of Grammar* (1924) p. 349; *Modern English Grammar III* (1927) p. 197.]



be "children who we think are hungry" because the relative is the subject of *are* and not the object of *think*. But we have a second test by which we can show that the "speech instinct" does not take the relative as a real subject, for in that case it would not be possible according to the usual rules to omit the relative, but, as a matter of fact, it is possible to say (as Keats writes in one of his letters): "I did not like to write before him a letter he knew was to reach your hands," or (as Mr Lloyd George said the day before yesterday) "In Central Europe there were blood feuds they all thought had been dead and buried for centuries," or "count the people who come, and compare them with the number you hoped would come"—here evidently it would nowadays be impossible to say "compare them with the number would come," and actual usage thus clearly shows that those grammarians are wrong who maintain that the insertion of the words "you hoped" or "he knew," etc. changes nothing in the relation between the pronoun and the verb. Now the curious thing is that the phenomenon is not confined to English: in Danish I have been able to discover no less than six tests by which it is evident that the pronoun is felt to be something different from the ordinary subject. I therefore think that we have here in Danish and English a separate kind of clause which might be called accusative with indicative (or, perhaps better, with finite verb) to be classed in some respects with the accusative with infinitive. It has not, of course, been my intention with these remarks to pass judgment in a question of what is good or correct English, for that would clearly be presumptuous on the part of a foreigner; my interest is only in the facts, and I find these insufficiently stated in books on "correct English." But I venture to think serious research is needed to settle such questions in any language whatever, while abstract logical reasoning has very little value, for as a matter of fact it is often nothing but a camouflaged transfer to English of some Latin rule which is not applicable to languages of totally different structure. The uniform grammatical terminology adopted a few years ago by several bodies in this country was certainly not a step in advance towards a clear understanding of grammatical facts, but I shall refrain from saying more on this knotty point.

In order to find out the facts about delicate points of grammar

it is quite necessary to use reliable editions, accurate in every detail. But while such editions are found of most very old texts, because these have been left to the care of accomplished scholars, and also of most Elizabethan authors, the same is not the case with many more recent works, where we must often be contented with reprints that may be very good in many ways, paper, print, etc., but in which the text has not been revised with the scrupulous care that respects every little detail of the original, even those peculiarities of style and grammar which may not be in favour nowadays. In many cases I fancy that the proof-reader even thinks that he does meritorious work in "correcting" the grammar of the old writer; and generally modern editions are nothing but reprints of reprints, as the original editions are not easily accessible, and thus the probability is that the number of errors or deviations from the original are constantly on the increase. Thus, *whom* in the sentences I have just been considering is corrected into *who* in recent reprints of the *Vicar of Wakefield*, and similarly these have *than I* at least in two places where Goldsmith wrote *than me* (ed. 1766, vol. 2, p. 3, "our cousin, who was himself in little better circumstances than me," and p. 29, "My pupil in fact understood the art...much better than me"). Quite apart from the view one may have of the correctness or the opposite of using *me* in this place it is clear that the conscientious grammarian has an interest in knowing that Goldsmith, occasionally at any rate, indulged in the form *me* here, and it would perhaps be useful if this Association insisted on the necessity of placing trustworthy editions in the hands of scholars.

The third and last element of the name of our society is *Association*. From what I have said with regard to the word *Research* it will be seen that to my mind a certain amount of cooperation is always required in any kind of research, for no worker is or can be completely isolated from, or independent of, the work of others. What is new in our Association, then, is nothing but the conscious organization of this cooperation, each scholar being through that means put in a position to benefit much more effectively from the works of others than has been previously possible. I look upon this as a signal advantage and envy the position of those who can from the beginning of their independent research be placed in contact with

those who have similar interests and work in the same or related fields. The necessary tendency of the hard times in which we are living is towards economy in every direction, and there can be no doubt that much unnecessary waste of efforts can be happily avoided through such a conscious organization of fellow-workers.

I need not expand on the economy effected through the avoidance of unnecessary competition, as when two scholars may come to know of each other's plans and thus be prevented from taking up exactly the same task and going through exactly the same texts for the same purpose, while they might just as well undertake tasks supplementing each other. Nor is it necessary to say much about the need for co-operation to bring about those comprehensive bibliographical handbooks, the utility of which is so obvious, but which surpass the forces of one man, or even of competent scholars of one nation. This has been generally recognized and is, I think, one of the chief reasons why this Association was formed. I want to express my full sympathy with the work that is being done in this respect: it is my sincere hope that the bibliographical year-books of our Association will be what they ought to be, patterns of fullness, of trustworthiness in every detail, and of practical arrangement.

It is not everything in science that can be achieved by cooperation: much of the best work must be left to the individual, and here talent or genius counts for very much indeed. There can be no doubt that the works that have given us the greatest pleasure and have stimulated us most are those in which one writer has given expression to his individual personality and has said something which no one else could have said in the same way. This applies to research work as well as to poetry and art in general. But by the side of this there is very much indeed that can be, or that must be, done by cooperation of many individuals: here genius may be shown in the planning of the whole, and in the way in which the work is organized, but the rest is left to cooperators whose work is more or less mechanical. The result may be a work of the greatest possible utility, not so stimulating as the work of one man of genius, but very useful indeed to anyone working in the same field. I am thinking, for instance, of the great Concordances to works of individual writers in which the English literature is happily so rich: I find them extremely useful for

many investigations in the use of words and grammatical forms. As a pattern of the best organization of that kind of work I should mention Professor Lane Cooper's *Concordance to the Poems of Wordsworth*: thanks to a carefully thought-out plan he managed in a comparatively short time to finish this enormous task and to give us a very reliable and most useful book. Let us hope that the Chaucer Concordance or Chaucer Dictionary planned by the late Ewald Flügel may soon see the light of the day: from the specimens he published some years ago in the *Anglia* it seems that the work was planned on too great a scale, and certainly a less ambitious scheme brought to an end within a limited period of time is in most cases more useful to the world than a scheme of such vast dimensions that it can never be carried through<sup>1</sup>. The Oxford New English Dictionary of course is a glorious example of an undertaking of very great dimensions and yet finished within a reasonable time, thanks to the genius of its organizers and to the energy of a most able staff of cooperators.

This Association cannot of course undertake cooperative work to be compared with the New English Dictionary, but it might do very useful work if its members were to assist one another in collecting and publishing advice as to the best way to conduct research and to make its results known. When I started collecting phonetical and grammatical observations I noted them down in exercise books with the result that after some time I was often unable to find again easily what I had written down, or that the page was so full that there was no space for entering new items. It was a great improvement when I hit upon the plan of writing down each item on a separate slip, but at first I did not even use slips of the same size. Slips can be arranged and re-arranged, and new ones inserted most easily. It would have saved me much work of transcribing if some one had at the start told me these things which I had to find out for myself, also the necessity of writing always on one side of the paper, etc. For some years I wrote down first the text of the quotation itself, and then the book and page, etc., where I had found it, but I discovered that in not a few cases I had forgotten to add this latter

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[<sup>1</sup> My hope has been fulfilled by the appearance of John S. P. Tatlock and Arthur G. Kennedy's excellent *Concordance to the Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*. 1927.]

information, and without a reference to the place where it had occurred, the quotation then proved useless, so after some time I made it a point always first to write the reference and then the quotation as the more secure way. Much advice of that kind could be made accessible to young scholars; and it should also be possible to collect useful hints as to the best way of arranging manuals, indexes, dictionaries, etc., so as to make it possible to utilize other people's experience and thus to economize the time of readers and users of books. Very often in using the index of a book one does not know whether the number found indicates the page or the number of the section into which the book is divided, but it would be easy enough to state that on the top of each page of the index, if only the author or index-maker thought of it. Advice as to the best typographical arrangement also might be systematized: anyone using Littré's Dictionary and the N.E.D. will have experienced the annoying way in which the former is printed and how much time is saved for the user of the latter by the admirable use of different types and many other expedients of equal utility. Some dictionaries succeed in compressing a great deal of matter by economizing space in a way that is anything but economic from the point of view of the user, not to speak of the tantalizing way some of them have of saying "see" such and such a word, so that instead of looking up one word you have to look up two or three. It might not be impossible to set up a standing committee charged with giving advice to makers of dictionaries, concordances, special vocabularies, and similar works. For there is certainly some truth in what Herbert Spencer says somewhere that "mankind go right only when they have tried all possible ways of going wrong"—and it may be worth while to prevent other people going wrong more than is strictly necessary.

Cooperation not only of individuals, but of nations, should be our watchword. I think dear old Dr Furnivall would have rejoiced in the formation of this Association, he who was always intent on forming literary societies and who had the greatest pleasure in enlisting workers from all countries to elucidate his beloved English literature. But in some ways we may be glad that he was spared our experiences of the last seven years: much of what we have seen would have been incompatible with his genial and kind-hearted nature. But

we must try to act in his spirit; and if the French proverb says "À la guerre comme à la guerre," our endeavour must be to supplement that by "Après la guerre comme avant la guerre"—or rather, if possible, to make future conditions even better than pre-war conditions were. Each of us in his field must do his best to make this world "fit for gentlemen to live in"—then it will also be fit for scholars to do research work in.

—*Linguistica*, 1934.



## FAREWELL LECTURE AT THE UNIVERSITY GIVEN ON 25TH MAY 1925<sup>1</sup>

I may be allowed today by general custom to talk more about myself than would be thought becoming at another time; if this shocks you, I can give you the consolation that it will not happen again.

Exactly a hundred years ago Charles Lamb said goodbye to the India House where he had served just as many years as I have done at the university. On his way home he looked in at his friend Crabb Robinson's dwelling in the Temple and dropped a note in his letter-box: "I have left the damned India House for ever! Give me great joy."

My feelings towards the institution I leave are not the same as Lamb's. I cherish deep gratitude to our university when I think of my undergraduate days and of my time as a professor, and I shall certainly miss not only my joint-work with my colleagues but especially my constantly rejuvenating ties with young students. But let me now cast a backward glance over my life to show how happily my own scientific life shaped itself. In spite of an apparently zigzag course by way of law, chess, shorthand, French literature and Danish dialects, the way from my first independent studies to my present-day interests has run tolerably straight.

As a boy I read with enthusiasm of Rasmus Rask and by help of his grammars made a certain start in Icelandic, Italian and Spanish: while I was still at school I had on my own initiative read a good deal in these languages. I count it also as a piece of luck that I had as my headmaster Carl Berg, who in a few small books had shown an

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<sup>1</sup> Printed in Danish in *Tanker og Studier*, Copenhagen 1932.



interest in comparative philology and who lent me books, among others books by Max Müller and Whitney. After my parents' deaths, I was much in the house of an uncle whose main interest was in the Romanic literatures and his collection of books was a treasured browsing place for me in my last years before going to the University.

In spite of these more or less childish studies I did not at once take to philology, but following a family tradition (my father, grandfather and great-grandfather held legal appointments) I turned to law. I have frequently been told that this never-completed study sharpened my logical sense. I am however more inclined to look on the benefits of my three or four years' study of law from a negative point of view. If I had proceeded directly to linguistics, I should have gone on straight with my school-work, especially if I had become a classical philologist,—at that time the only organized linguistic study. I should probably, like so many others, have remained an orthodox disciple of Madvig. Now on the contrary linguistic study came as a freeing of one's personality from the mere learning by heart of paragraphs and the ready-made opinions of professors—which was all that the study of law consisted in at that time. It was this so-called study that I reacted against. I wanted to go my own way and not to have my opinions dictated to me from outside.

For seven years I was a shorthand reporter in the house of parliament, this gave me my bread and butter during some years when otherwise I had nothing to live on. If I had not had that at my back, I should not have dared to take the plunge and leave law. It also perhaps gave me something else I was in need of.

The first school-testimonial I received when at the age of ten I left Randers for Frederiksborg, contained these words. 'If he could get over his Jutland slowness, he might perhaps turn out a smart pupil.' Shorthand-writing accustomed me to be quick in catching a point and quick in writing it down, and this more rapid 'tempo' has no doubt helped me in my literary work. I have indeed in the course of years reeled off a good deal of manuscript. Thus I may be said to have been lucky to have learnt shorthand as a student.

Another advantage befell my student time; on account of near-sight I was excused military service. If I had been taken, not only would the time have been lost to my studies, but I should either have

been cowed, or perhaps my inborn desire to do a left-turn when I was commanded to the right might easily have brought me into an uncomfortable conflict with the brutality of my sergeant which might have made me smart for the whole of my life. This is a point on which I feel strongly: I consider conscription one of the nineteenth century's most devilish inventions, something that has most potently contributed to detestable wars and with its systematic training in killing and its unqualified claim to obedience has had a demoralizing effect on many and many a young man. That I was accordingly spared.

But to return to my studies, studies pursued rather for love than for subsistence. I intended to pass an examination in Romanic Languages, but meanwhile without thinking very much of the examination I read whatever occurred to me or came in my way. I then had the good luck to get hold of the Norwegian edition of Storm's *English Philology*, which had been published a little time before. This convinced me of the necessity of phonetics, and pointed out to me the best books for studying it and so led me among others to the works of Sweet. As those were based on English, I perceived that I must make myself acquainted with the English sound-system, and I took lessons with four or five Englishmen consecutively and compared their pronunciation with that which I read of in Storm and Sweet, although English otherwise lay outside my course of study.

As for French a little band of us studied it eagerly; we met on Sunday mornings and read papers to one another. Soon after I also got into the Philological-Historical Society, which was then full of life and in which the younger members were also very active. Here in my student years I lectured among other things on phonetic spelling (a first sketch of my 'antalphabetic' system), on vulgar French, and on Danish accent.

Two years after I had abandoned the study of law, a new examination was instituted, more especially calculated for those who wanted to be schoolmasters. Many of us who were preparing for the exclusively theoretical "magisterkonferens" were inclined to take the new examination. But we did not agree with the requirement of Latin as a compulsory subject. With Axel Olrik and myself as spokesmen, we took the unprecedented step of calling together the whole

philosophical faculty in order to get it to dispense if possible with this requirement. One professor after another stood up against us, the one that showed most understanding of our position was Kristian Erslev the historian, and along with him many years later I was able to carry the reform which at that time I sought to accomplish in vain. I must say that in preparing for my examination (in French as major, and English and Latin as minor subjects) I did not trouble much about the Latin part. French was taught at that time by Thor Sundby, but after attending his classes a few years I came to the conclusion that I had learnt from him all that he had to give. Stephens, the lecturer in English, I only heard five or six hours, and I know decidedly that I learnt nothing from him. Most of what I learnt I learnt by my own efforts. But outside the course for my examination I had excellent teachers, first and foremost Vilhelm Thomsen in comparative linguistics, to whom I am under the deepest obligation, not only for his instruction, but also for all his personal influence on me and for the warm interest he always took in my studies. Further I profited much by the lectures of Herman Møller on the history of the German language, and by those of Karl Verner in Russian. With them also I met with much understanding and warm interest in my special lines of work.

My interests were not exclusively linguistic, indeed one reason for my choice of studies was the desire to make myself better acquainted with eighteenth century France. I studied Voltaire, the materialists, and especially Diderot with ardour. Here I met Knud Ipsen and for some time I read with him the history of philosophy. In my examination my chief author was Diderot, who was also the subject of Knud Ipsen's doctoral dissertation which came out after his lamented death. He also introduced me to Høffding, who had recently been appointed to the university and now once a month in his home gathered a number of young people together to thrash out general problems; many of the men for whom these meetings were of significance, have since won distinguished names in science and literature.

Just at this time came a new movement in European linguistics, which soon occupied me very much. Phonetics became a watch-word and great emphasis was laid on first-hand observations of contem-

porary speech, a philology of the ear instead of the eye. Apart from the observation of particular details I was also drawn to general points of view, and this associated itself with my dilettante interest in a little philosophy: traces of this will be found even in my first notices of phonetic works in the *Tidsskrift for filologi* edited by Thomsen and more in my treatise on sound-laws (1886), which contains the germs of much that appeared in my later books.

As objects of first-hand studies I had my own speech and that of the people around me: Danish has always been one of my favourite subjects. As a student I began to collect materials for a comparison between Høysgaard's pronunciation in the eighteenth century and the speech of today. I got a strong inducement to work in that field from the Swedish phonetician J. A. Lundell, the editor of the great journal of Swedish dialects. When visiting our libraries he wished to familiarize himself with Danish pronunciation and I was fortunate enough to be recommended to him as a teacher by Thomsen. He kindly encouraged me to study Danish dialects, which I began to do with students here in Copenhagen and later with peasants in different districts. In this way I came in contact with H. F. Feilberg, one of the finest men I have ever known, loveable, simple, charming, unassuming, and openminded, with a fine understanding of peasants and imbued with the true spirit of a scholar. I was many times his guest in his manse at Darum and afterwards at Askov, read for a long time the proofs of his Jutland dictionary, and even long after I was occupied with other studies and had got away from active concern with Danish dialects, he continued to be my good old friend, a visit from whom to his advanced old age was always a pleasure to my wife and myself.

It was lucky for me that just when I had myself been roused to scientific work a movement was beginning in various countries which felt like something new and likely to bear fruit. The number of phoneticians was at that time small, so that it was easy to come into contact with them wherever they might be: they formed a little band of brothers which soon received me into their ranks.

The one I first got in connexion with, who for a few years came to mean much to me, was a German of my own age, Felix Franke. Our correspondence began in 1884, and quickly became very exten-

sive, as we had many interests in common. Letters passed every week from his side and mine till he died in 1886. Seldom has one seen such an idealistic enthusiasm for science as in him and in spite of his youth and tuberculosis he had amassed very wide knowledge. Though I never managed to see him, I was more closely tied to him than to any of my fellow-students at home, and was spiritually more akin to him than to anyone else. Two years after his death I visited his family in the little town of Sorau in Nieder-Lausitz and was received as a son of the house. I wrote a memoir of him in the journal *Phonetische Studien* and I published the work he left behind him on colloquial German.

The reason of my first letter to him was the wish to obtain permission to translate his little book *Die praktische spracherlernung auf grund der psychologie und der physiologie der sprache*. That was one of the first works in which the cry was raised for a reform in the teaching of languages. This movement stood in close connexion with the wakening interest in practical and theoretical phonetics and emanated from the same circle. An important point was the use of phonetic texts, but when I wanted to use this instrument in my private lessons, no connected texts at all were at my disposal, apart from some small fragments in Ellis and Sweet with the sounds denoted in a very unpractical way. I had therefore to give my first pupils phonetic passages in manuscript, which I had made myself. Franke's *Phrases de tous les jours*, which he managed to finish just before his death, and my own *Kortfattet engelsk grammatik for tale- og skriftsproget* (1885), both with phonetic spelling throughout, were the fruits of our common work.

I count it among the things I am thankful for that through this movement I came early into close connexion with Henry Sweet and Johan Storm, whom I regard as my teachers, and with a set of young 'friends of reform', Paul Passy and his brother Jean in France, Viëtor, Fr. Beyer, Rambeau, Klinghardt, Wendt in Germany, Miss Soames in England, Western in Norway and Lundell in Sweden. They remained friends for life,—many of them are no more. Along with the two last I struck a blow against the old methods at the Philological Congress at Stockholm in 1886: we founded a Scandinavian association for the better teaching of languages, and since we could not find a common

Scandinavian name, on my proposition it was called after Cicero's old slogan *Quousque tandem* which Viëtor had first used as a *nom de guerre* for his little brochure: '*Der sprachunterricht muss umkehren*'.

Our efforts were not restricted to phonetics and the use of phonetic spelling but were also directed against the 'swotting' of grammatical rigmaroles and against the disconnected and to a great extent meaningless sentences then rampant. In Kaper's grammar at that time one found, among others, sentences such as 'Wir sind nicht hier', or 'Das pferd war alt gewesen'. Finally we insisted on less translation. Translation was to be replaced by other exercises wherever this could be done with advantage so that the use of the mother-tongue should be repressed as much as possible. On these questions for some years many fierce battles were fought with the tongue and the pen; at meetings of teachers we were much attacked but also struck out hard in return. To carry out these ideas in practice I also began to compose schoolbooks in French and English, at first without the least thought of any pecuniary return; for that they were too radical.

Nor did I contemplate the possibility of obtaining a post at the university. If I occupied myself at all with thoughts of the future, for which I had little time, I could only imagine myself continuing to give lessons in the morning and practise shorthand in the afternoon while I spent my free-time on more or less regular studies of things which I had at heart. But one fine morning when after my examination I had gone abroad, chiefly with the thought of gaining greater practical facility in languages, I received a letter from Vilhelm Thomsen who rejoiced that I was in England and asked me if I could not think of working with the aim of succeeding Stephens. The prospect enticed me and I then decided to extend my time abroad and, as Sweet advised, go to Berlin to study Old and Middle English with Zupitza and Hoffory. First however I spent some months in Paris with Passy, during which I attended among others Gaston Paris's lectures. And when I returned home, in spite of the debts incurred by my travels, I gave up my profitable post in the house of parliament, and became exclusively a teacher and researcher.

Before I had completed a doctoral thesis on an English subject, I found myself bespoken in another field, which as I have said had

interested me from early times: when a journal was to be started on dialect and folklore, *Dania*, I wrote the introductory article, 'Dania's phonetic spelling', and undertook the task of editing it with Nyrop (Dahlerup joined us later). Of that cooperation I have many precious memories. But luckily I nevertheless got my doctorate, before Stephens retired, and so I became in 1893 the first 'ordinary professor' of English in our university—Stephens had only been at first lector, afterwards 'docent'. Now you see again what good luck has followed me: my post was created just as I was more or less ripe to undertake it.

When I look back to the first years after my appointment, I find a great change. Most striking is the enormous rise in the number of students: in those days far more than now it was possible to get in personal touch with every pupil, or at least most of them, which I have missed in these later years. But since the school act of 1903, students have come far better prepared—at any rate in my subject. Previously they had only read English two hours a week in their two last school-years, so that I was then forced to take on quite elementary work which one can now assume to be known already.

At the beginning I had far more to do with schools than later, I was often examiner ('censor'), and travelled about also as Professor Tuxen's deputy to be present at the daily teaching. In discussions on methods of teaching I took a considerable share, and there asserted the views which I put together in my book *Sprogundervisning* (How to teach a foreign language, 1901).

All along I have had great happiness in my work at the University, whether lectures or cooperation with students and colleagues; among the last I would refer particularly to Erslev, Høffding and Nyrop. I am also glad to have taken my share in many reforms for the benefit of the University. If I now mention some of them, it is not to ascribe honour to myself on their account, I have only cooperated with others, who, it may be, were richer in initiative and in influence than I.

Examinations have been re-organized, Latin is no more a compulsory subject, and a really scientific treatment of one part of the major subject is insisted on.

Connected with this was the establishment of a laboratory (what the Germans call 'seminar') which has provided students with the opportunity of a better and fuller study of things at first hand, whereas in my student-days we had in the main to make shift with the books we were able to procure for ourselves. Along with this came the possibility of varied and really scientific exercises.

The University has been made democratic by the abolition of places in the Consistorium held in virtue of seniority and by the introduction of a Student's Council: now students have a hearing in the arrangements of their study and examination.

Exhibitions ('stipendier') have been brought under a single control, and so great inequalities have been abolished. Unfortunately the number of exhibitions has not kept pace with the number of students and their value has not risen to compensate for the decline in the value of money.

Foreign languages are permitted in doctoral theses; hence along with the corresponding reform in the publications of our Academy of sciences and the creation of the Rask-Ørsted fund we have brought about a more potent cooperation between science in Denmark and science abroad.

In my teaching, I may have done more for language than for literature, though I have always given exercises in literature, chiefly on some works of supreme merit, *Beowulf* (especially in its relation to old Scandinavian tradition), Chaucer, Marlowe, Shakespeare, Burns, Shelley and Browning. I have laid the chief weight on a minute understanding of the text, but I have never lost sight of literary points of view and hope to have imparted to my hearers some of my own enthusiasm for the great poets. My greatest enjoyment, and no doubt that of my hearers as well, has been in my Chaucer classes, partly because Chaucer has such a wonderful power of describing human beings, partly because in this field it was so easy to give students tasks of different kinds for original investigation and to vary these at every repetition of the course. I have tried throughout to avoid repetitions by treating the same thing in a different way and striving to bring out new points of view every time that I came to treat what was apparently the same subject.



Still even in my university teaching I have been chiefly a linguistic investigator, laying stress both on the living language and its historical evolution. To anyone who finds that grammar is a worthless finicking with trifles, I would reply that life consists of little things; the important matter is to see them largely. All scientific inquiry must occupy itself with a mass of details whose significance is not evident to the uninitiated, whether it be the life-conditions of mosquito-larvae, the distant paths of a comet or the state of society in Valdemar Atterdag's time. The investigator must not be asking the whole time what good his investigations will do or can do: that may reveal itself in the most unexpected places. Research has its first reward in the work itself, chiefly in the natural joy at any, even the least, discovery, which brings clearness into what before was not understood.

As for linguistic investigation in particular, I would especially emphasize three things:

First that of understanding the texts as a pure matter of philology in the narrow traditional meaning of the word: to penetrate into the innermost thoughts of the best men and women.

Next to see what speech is and therewithal what the human soul is. Speech is the noblest instrument to bind man to man, and thought to thought, and therefore deserves study on its own account. Unless one understands speech, one knows nothing of the nature of thought. And if it be said that the letter killeth, it is also true that the sound giveth life, and this applies also to forms and words rightly interpreted, so that they are received as spirit, as the spirit's necessary mode of utterance. Without speech no logic, and the 'logic of speech' and 'philosophy of grammar' are worthy of close study.

Thirdly, it is by speech as by literature, or best by both combined, that one comes to understand the people from whom they emanated. The linguistic investigator and the literary investigator, especially the man who is concerned with the civilized races of his own period, has also the task of combating the ghastly malady of our time, nationalism, which is something remote as the poles from patriotism: the essence of patriotism is love—love to land and people and speech, and it may well be combined with friendship and sympathy for other peoples. But the essential mark of nationalism is antipathy, disdain,

finally hatred to all that is strange, just because it is strange. Much of that instinctive antipathy is due to a want of knowledge and disappears more and more, the better one learns to know the foreign nation. Here linguistic and literary understanding is a help and it is one of the noblest tasks of the student of modern languages to diffuse knowledge and love of what is best in other peoples. Especially now since the World-war this is a task of the very greatest importance, since it is necessary that the wounds of this gruesome time should be healed and normal relations, even friendship, be established as before, or rather on a much better footing than before, the war.

In these words I have sought to indicate the spirit in which I have striven to work. It is not much that I have been equal to, but I have done my best. My relations with my students in the course of the years have always been a source of great happiness to me. I was therefore touched and delighted when the students of English sent me a pressing request not to retire. This however could not shake the resolution I had made long ago and to which as early as 1911 (long before officials got the legal right of retiring with a pension) I gave forcible expression when I wrote publicly that 'in order not to be an old fogey who sits immovable as a fixture I have made my wife take a solemn vow that she will shoot me if I have not retired of my own accord at the age of 65. This little sacrifice one should be able to make for science.'

I now accordingly withdraw and give place to younger men. I would end by expressing the hope that they may have the good fortune to effect much good for science, for the University and its students, for Denmark and for the whole of mankind.

— *Linguistica*, 1933.



## CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE

May I offer my cordial congratulations to The Institute for Research in English Teaching on the completion of its first ten years. Ever since the founding of the Institute I have followed its activity with vivid interest and have greatly appreciated those of its publications that I have seen. So far as I know, Japan is the only country in which has been created an Institute dealing actively with problems of this kind, an undertaking which should be of the greatest interest to all civilized nations at a time when international communication and co-operation are more vital than ever before. Let me attempt a classification of these problems, though it must be admitted that the classes cannot be kept neatly apart and that there is a good deal of overlapping among them.

(1) *Why* do people require foreign language teaching? What are their objects in learning one or more foreign languages? Of course, these objects vary a great deal from pupil to pupil and from nation to nation.

(2) *What* should we teach? The spoken or the written language, or both? In matters of pronunciation, what standard should we adopt, British or American? Or should we attempt a reconciliation of both?

(3) *What* should we teach *first*? And what can be put off to later stages? In connexion with this we have the question of a gradation of textbooks, and the all-important problem: What words are the most useful ones to our pupils (some of them may even be called indispensable)? This cannot be answered simply by counting what words are found most frequently in a number of books or texts, and we are led naturally to a weighing of that most curious conceit of some scholars, "Basic English," and to a consideration of the relation between words in themselves and their use in collocations, and of the stylistic value of words and idioms.

(4) *How* should we teach a foreign language? The technique of language teaching involves a great many problems of detail: talking or reading, questions and answers, translation, direct or indirect

## CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE

method, or a compromise, etc.

The problems are manifold, and it must be acknowledged that the I.R.E.T. has shown both courage and skill in tackling them and has thrown considerable light on many of them. I may add that much in its publications is of value not only to those actually engaged in teaching English to foreigners, but also to those occupied with the theoretical study of languages in general. It is therefore with great joy that I offer my best wishes for the continued activity of the Institute.

When eight years ago, I retired from my professorship of English in the University of Copenhagen, I resumed my views of the value of the subject I had been teaching for so many years in the following words, which I hope you will forgive me for repeating here.

"To anyone who finds that linguistic study is a worthless finicking with trifles, I would reply that life consists of little things; the important matter is to see them largely. All scientific inquiry must occupy itself with a mass of details whose significance is not evident to the uninitiated, whether it be the life-conditions of mosquito-larvae, the distant paths of a comet or the state of society in the reign of some mediaeval king. The investigator must not be asking the whole time what good his investigations will do or can do: that may reveal itself in the most unexpected places. Research has its first reward in itself, chiefly in the natural joy at any—even the least—discovery which brings clearness into what before was not understood. As for linguistic investigation in particular, I would especially emphasize three things:

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—*A Commemorative Volume, The Institute for Research in English Teaching, 1933.*











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*"A book that is shut is but a block"*

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